Narrative Through Cartoon:

a study in visual drafting

PhD in Education

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ABSTRACT:

This study is designed to explore the use of visual images in combination with the teaching of narrative in the classroom. The theoretical background establishes the need for different modes of thinking to create the optimum conditions for the development of metacognition. Ideas concerning the relation of children's drawing to their overall cognitive growth are drawn from Bruner, Vygotsky, Lambert-Brittain and Freeman. More recent research by Cross and Balchin and Coleman into the role of graphicacy in conceptualising and the development of logico-spatial thinking suggests that without a proper visual education children could lack effective visual-verbal interactive possibilities for promoting certain verbal modes of thought.

Metaphor, given its visual component, is seen as key to language development. The exploration of creative metaphor and "abstractive seeing" lead to the work of Paivio and Osgood which demonstrated how dual coding allows the abstract to be concretized by metaphorically linked 'mediators' - images.

Gombrich's distinction between knowing and seeing was precursor to a discussion of recent theories of perception. Bruce and Green concluded that perceptual learning is an increase in specificity - features of which can be seen in many of the children's texts.

The gathering of data followed a cyclical, action research pattern, having three main stages and going cross-phase with an age range of 10-13 years. The first two samples were from Year Eight cartoons and writing. The second stage was a more general exploration of Year Six work while the third used samples from a top band Year Eight English group. This comprised a more structured experiment involving selection of candidates and further development of the analytic method with two types of sam ple taken; one selected and one random. The main concern was to examine transference of detail and the development of metacommunicative ideas through the visual-verbal interaction.

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Illustrations

CHAPTER ONE

Seeing and the tacit component

Introduction:

Every act of knowing entails an act of personal judgement. True objectivity is as elusive as the tabula rasa or the innocent eye. Thus the message from Polanyi in his exploration of personal knowledge. Learning a skill or craft embraces a whole area of tacit knowledge which is handed down by observation and practice and for this reason art, which falls into disuse for a generation, is no longer replicable. Who now can make a Stradivarius?[1]

While many aspects of research and discovery are undoubtedly aided by more objective technical methodology, the art of knowing (appraisal and the tacit skills of the expert) "remains essentially at the heart of science."[2]

> Like the tool, the sign or symbol can be conceived as such only in the eyes of a person who relies on it to achieve or to signify something. This reliance is a personal commitment which is

[1] Polanyi, (1958, p.53)
[2] Ibid., 55

> involved in all acts of intelligence by which we integrate something subsidiary to the centre of our focal attention.[3]

This process, Polanyi tells us, is one of unconscious trial and error where useful actions are selected to move towards the intended end and by which we feel our way to success without specifically knowing how we do it. These actions though, are never given more than subsidiary focus and therefore exist only as part of our tacit knowledge.

The particulars of a skill appear to be unspecifiable but by no means always in the sense that we are ignorant of them, he says. Subsidiary and focal awareness are mutually exclusive but when focussing on a whole, we are subsidiarally aware of its parts, though Polanyi says there is no difference in the intensity of the two kinds of awareness.[4]

> Also when something is seen as subsidiary to a whole, this implies that it participates in sustaining the whole and we may now regard this function as its *meaning* within the whole.[5]

Thus may a sign (word or pictogram) become amalgamated with its presented object into a whole.

About language, Polanyi talks of its metaphoric role and of how symbolic operations assist thought, demonstrating the tacit element

[3] Ibid., 61
[4] Ibid., 57
[5] Ibid., 58

here too. The very act of speaking is an interpersonal process which requires continuous subsidiary monitoring of vocabulary and register, since ...

> To speak is to *contrive* signs, to *observe* their fitness, and to *interpret* their alternative relations; though the animal possesses each of these three faculties, he cannot combine them.[6]

What is important to note, he tells us, is that it is not just mere manipulation of symbols which is effective since that does not give us any new information, but the process of so doing ... "assists the inarticulate mental powers exercised by reading off their result."[7]

Given freedom from the routine of writing in a normal teaching context, what children can do and the imagination they bring to bear is surprising; young people professing to dislike writing intensely tend to produce contributions with unusual originality and freshness. Work taken home, freed from classroom shackles, also frequently seeks different source material and varied modes of expression.

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Even within the school building, drawings and photographs from the world beyond the gates can help pupils to 'see' differently unleashing

[6] Ibid., 82
[7] Ibid., 83

unexpected creativity and, what is more, all levels of ability seem to benefit.

In the days prior to the National Curriculum there was more freedom to run cross-curricular courses. I had long been convinced that art could be of tremendous help, when used properly linked, to the production of written work and from one such course (a combination of art, music, drama and English) a particular example came to my attention. The cartoon itself was a combined effort with circular rather than square frames, and though the subsequent written sequel offered by one member of the group only, could in no way be called brilliant, for the small boy who wrote it, it was an immense step forward.

First then the cartoon story, the joint creation of three twelve year boys. The economy of style in *Six Feet Under* is really quite impressive. The title page itself - in fact just the title on its own - is crammed with meaning and the greater part is the result of full consciousness on the part of the authors. The first word is a six with a bullet hole through it; feet are substituted for the 'els' and they are end-on, that is to say 'turned up'! The bar tender in the 'salloon' is a Chinese cook from *Bonanza* (Droopy Cartoon Time), while Sheriff Mart looks more like a cross between Buddy Holly and an off-duty railwayman. Big Feet Pete himself makes an anaphoric link with the title, while the arrows are dual function

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symbols on this page, seeming to indicate the direction for the word "Under" - into or under the earth - whilst providing continuity and cohesion.

On the title page the captions that are there are restricted to labelling, to the identification of each of the characters. Like the bar tender, Billy the Midge and Dinky his horse, are borrowed from another cartoon strip.

It is a nice visual touch (perhaps a shade lucky too) that the vertical arrow pointing downwards - which ought to take your eye off the page - does not. The stars and lettering around Billy together with the diagonal arrow "STARRING" firmly bring you back to the character. The star, or villain of the piece, Big Feet Pete, is portrayed not only with big feet but also as much larger than the sheriff or the bar tender. Pete's end is there in his beginning - the arrows this time offering cataphoric reference concerning his final sojourn in jail. [This was actively discussed and thought through by the boys.]

The scene is set in the very first drawing for a drama in the American West or Mexico with a burning sun, mountains showing the typical mesa and butte formations associated with arid desert conditions and, lest you should be in any doubt, a prickly cactus. We are then fully

prepared for the narrative itself which opens in a bar. A moose's head (N. American mammal - right for context), is hung above the louvred swing doors. Would they have remembered such a detail in a written text? The sun can be seen shining brightly through the doors. Inside, a cowboy is the piano player. He is immediately identifiable because of his scarf, stetson and a gun belt. The staff and notes above his beer glass on the piano symbolise the sound of music. To the right of the doors can be seen the edge of the bar adorned by another beer glass and watched over by the inscrutable Chinese bar tender. The dunce's cap with a large capital 'D' indicates his lack of brain power. Other than the sun there is nothing above the swing doors but below them can be seen a pair of spurred boots and the bulky outline of a large sack. The owner of the boots must be short!

Most certainly a variety of ellipsis is operating here because by the time we reach frame two a lot of physical movement has been assumed and as in a written text, here too it is only a feature of cohesion if that 'which is uniquely recoverable', is left out.[8] Billy the Midge, for it is he, has entered what is clearly his 'local' since steps are in place to allow him to stand on a level with the bar to drink the pint we saw in frame one. Positioning a character's head and/or body is crucial because it

[8] Katz, E. W. & Brent, S. B., Understanding Connectives, in The J. of Verbal Language & Verbal Behaviour, (1968)

can 'instruct' the 'reader' as to what to see and in what order. Such devices can be seen as the visual equivalent of demonstrative reference.

Billy's sack containing the loot is at the foot of the steps but here visual cohesion is definitely missed and a symbol, a pound or dollar sign was needed. Sheriff Mart has tottered nervously through the half open door. Big Feet Pete, his rotting teeth bared, glances back at the scene and dominates the foreground. Both he and the timid sheriff look ready to draw.

Frame three explodes into implied action. Its reduced size makes it quite difficult to interpret but using the larger original it is possible to see that the central shape represents a ball of dust raised by the struggle which has ensued. The bar tender, foolishly in the circumstances, is trying to fill his glass and has it shot from his right hand by a bullet. His eyes have reverted to squinting but this time with pain. The bullet passes through the top of his hat. Liquid squirts from the falling glass, drawn short lines indicate its motion in the direction of the bar tender.

Three guns only can be seen firing from the dust ball. It may be that the artists have considered the matter of visual perspective or Sheriff Mart may only have one gun. He did appear to be right handed (see frame

two). Big Feet Pete is in the midst of the melée; we know because one large unshod foot is emerging. Such an image is rather like personal reference, it has to be part of Pete and, though we can't see the rest of him, it is cataphoric in function linking with earlier frames and ensuring the semantic and visual continuity of the story. Also crawling out from under is Billy (bottom right). There is a nice perspective on the overturned stool and the broken bottles area - detail which reinforces the right atmosphere.

Frame four moves us to another part of the saloon where, because it has an almost circular shape and is surrounded by the other four, it highlights the floor show focussing visually on the humour. Two rather butch chorus girls with very powerful leg muscles and strangely hinged anatomy are expelling a presumably drunken client. Another can be spied peering through the stage curtains either having taken cover when the fight began, or having been roused by the noise. The fellow flying through the air leaves behind another upset stool. Lines radiate from his behind indicating pain from the force of the kick.

"Oof" in a broken bubble suggests that the stool has connected with yet another character in refuge behind the curtains. Bottom centre a customer smiling happily - "He, hic, *****" - bottle in one hand, glass in the other, is gently hiccoughing himself into oblivion. The perspective of

the overturned stool and broken table is not quite so good this time. The bottle is clutched in the left hand of this customer, possibly a further indication of his drunkenness. The gun, in spite of its size, in the left hand quarter of the picture, is firing almost unobtrusively.

In the fifth frame two half-clad spectators watch from the vantage point of the stage clutching themselves in cold and horror as the look on the drunk's face turns to shocked disbelief. Liquid - blood or beer - spurts from the bullet holes. It is a fairly typical 'comic' blasting. Bottle and glass fly severally from his grasp.

A number of objects in frame six ensure continuity; the backdrop is still the stage but we have moved away now from the overturned stool and broken table. Watching silently from between the curtains is the figure first seen in frame four. Big Feet Pete, just right of centre, is using one of his enormous prehensile appendages to stun Sheriff Mart.

In the next frame Pete escapes riding barefoot in the stirrups on a horse with pantomime back legs. These show the kind of configuration one associates with the drawings of young children who haven't really observed and don't know the anatomical variations of the pentadactyl limb in a horse and consequently plump for the one they know with the 'knee' in the wrong place. There is sweat flying from Pete's face and

brow. Breath steams from the horse's nostrils. Together with a large sun and its rays in the top right corner the steam indicates that it is very hot. The horse's tongue (not as I first thought a cheroot) is extended to pant. Again the writers' lack of knowledge of sweat gland distribution in different species is shown. Anatomically perhaps they are basing their drawings on what they do know more about; possibly cats or dogs. The reappearance of the cactus symbolises desert conditions while a few short horizontal lines indicate motion. On Pete's back is the bag of loot.

The size of the final picture posed a problem on the page so another large arrow echoes the continuity technique from the title page and takes us back in a loop to the left hand side at the bottom of page two; this particular symbol is crucial in the maintenance of cohesion here. There in frame eight Billy the Midge has come up trumps on his trusty steed Dinky. Because of a change in proportions - either Dinky has shrunk or Billy has grown - there is very nearly another example of missed cohesion here. However, Billy has followed Pete who, still sweating, has climbed onto the last carriage of a steam train with its smoke drifting back under a blistering sun. Billy fires and apparently peppers Pete's back.

The penultimate frame is a close-up shot on top of two of the railway carriages. Pete's prone but usefully rigid body spans the gap between

them and the loot is wedged beneath him. A mountain dominates the background, Billy's hat has blown from his head, the train is still moving; no-one has pulled the communication cord.

When we reach the last frame of all it is split into five sections echoing the grouping of the ten frames which fall into two natural parts. These constraints though seem to be purely visual; they do not relate to natural breaks in the narrative; for linking the verbal and visual concepts in that way would have been a strong and very sophisticated boost for cohesion.

Poor old Pete is shackled in leg irons in his arrowed prisoner's suit. His feet are still bare and he is on cobbles. Barbed wire tops the perimeter of the enclosure and, lest you should be in any doubt, the wall is labelled 'jail'. Sheriff Mart has hung up his hat on a stand, his guns and badge are framed on the wall as he sits looking - as he has throughout - faintly dazed. Clearly it has all been too much for him, whereas Billy the Midge stands stretched to full height, hands clasped behind his back, a sheriff's or marshal's badge resplendent on his chest. The bar tender is back behind his bar, the original enigmatic scowl on his face, with 'salloon' firmly appended to the wall above him (note the bullet hole above the 'D' - a tidy cataphoric link). These cameos neatly provide an ending asking for a minimum of 'reader' interpretation and the last two

sections operate jointly to provide a coda. The "Loony Tunes" 'That's all Folks', with an owl as a minor variant for that particular borrowed cartoon, leads naturally to 'The End' spattered appropriately with bullet holes.

While none of the characters is a straight copy, some very familiar cartoon conventions are being used. Because of this derivative nature and the associations we bring to the story, the whole is possessed of much borrowed movement. The general cohesion of the text and continuity of action is largely maintained by pictorial and visual symbols with the occasional verbal interjection.

The beginning of the written part two is definitely in the spirit of the part one cartoon, though it must be remembered it only has one author. The hot, burning sun is a symbol which has considerable power in the illustrated version and here it is again offering continuity with the jail as a logical location from which to continue the narrative. What has also survived here is the humour. In a sense it had to. Big Feet Pete ipso facto, has monstrous feet but it is a lovely touch to have him clipping his toe nails. The feet are thus brought more fully into imaginal prominence. What more natural way to fill your time whilst in jail - on a par with doodling on your book cover in English, and perhaps the parallel doesn't stop there?

To set this particular composition into context, a number of points need to be made which may help to explain some of the features of the writing. In the first instance it is somewhat longer than this writer's normal offering and it was done at home (at my instigation) as a continuation of the story. Judged by many of the criteria which suggest maturity, this piece by a twelve year old is very immature and yet there are signs of a linguistic ability which he rarely shows on paper and, because of shyness, doesn't display orally in class either.

In the earlier sections before he tires, some very interesting things are happening. See for example his original use of "to grip himself across the room." This prehensile feat (or should it be feet?) is presumably easier and less dangerous with one's nails clipped.

In fact Perera's contention is that phrase structure is a better guide than clause structure in determining the maturity of the writer.[9] Novice writers employ only simple noun phrases as subject and if we search this piece of writing it is evident that pre-modification in this respect is entirely missing. Descriptive depth is lacking; an aspect of visual detail which clearly hasn't been picked up and transferred from the cartoon story. The writer concentrates solely on what is happening, on conveying action and movement. (This is of course also strongly present

in the cartoon.) The verbs are generally in the simple past although the opening shows strong use of auxiliaries to create the continuous past:- "was beating", "was working" and echoed in the participle "leaving" and there is just the one use of the perfective aspect in "had escaped". There is some post-modification however, with unusual, not to say creative use of the lexical component in the verb phrase "was to grip".

There is though, some use of modal verbs and a number of clauses where the modal has been elided in the interests of cohesion. "Pete could escape and (could) have his revenge." However this is a speech structure feature that is to say, it is virtually automatic or formulaic, and where not to elide would be impossibly boring. It is a piece dominated by the use of simple additive conjunctions, which outnumber the causal "so/ so that" (of which he is also very fond) by nearly three to one and the only adversative to be found is the simplest -"but".

Generally speaking, relative clauses increase in occurrence between the ages of 7-10, and this is a continuing feature of the secondary years, but there is only one example here and that is of the earliest occurring type, finite and in the predicate.

"So he stamped on the wood witch was quite rotty..."

[9] See the work of Perera, K., and others

Surprisingly then, in view of this, earlier in the text we have two examples of non-finite adverbial clauses, firm indicators of maturity. The first (l.4)is introduced by a temporal conjunction whose semantic appropriateness has already been registered - "whilst clipping his toe nails." The second, also occurring in an earlier passage is -"leaving the door open." All this goes counter to the first reading's overall impression, enhanced by the simple cohesives 'and', 'so' and 'then', of an advancement of chronological order only. This might be expected because this is after all a narrative but it is disappointing that there are few instances of thought outside the strictly narrative line. Perhaps this is because he simply isn't happy using the type of connectives which would free him from the chronologic, allowing some thoughtful, descriptive digression.

There is another factor which could suggest an underlying, untapped competence and that is a preponderance of long, rambling sentences in the first part at least. Often the effect of the grammatical structure is such that a very minor alteration in the way the piece is punctuated would be enough to make a marked stylistic improvement.

"The gard normally brings Petes dinner in a barrel because he's got a big appetite, anyway when he brought it in he said, 'Come on Pete dive in. Pete, Pete, Pete where are you?' Just then Pete slipped....." The first comma

ought to have been a full stop but at least he shows, in that he has marked it at all, that he has left the parenthetical aside and returned to the main narrative. The humour smacks of a similar appeal to audience shown in the cartoon, while the direct speech with its urgent repetition is his first venture into a more mimetic approach. On line 36 where the main clause is fronted by the prepositional phrase, there should have been a new paragraph and a full stop after 'hole', completing the first sentence.

The guard's response is 'visual', slapstick comedy and parallels the third frame of the cartoon. From the point where again the writer has omitted the paragraph marking ..... "In the morning.." the sentences are also badly marked. He inserts yet another causal "so" - very unimaginative - but then almost redeems the situation by putting the subject before the adverb in "Pete then went crashing down...". Again the visual element seems to be uppermost.

At the start of page 3 there is a sudden and complete switch in focalization. Quite obviously he has not bothered to re-read this and there was probably a break in the composing process as well. Certainly the original impetus is missing with a string of loosely linked clauses and no embedding. However by line 53 he has recovered sufficiently to switch back to the third person with the action again dominant, while

line 62 unexpectedly provides the only 'Americanism' in the whole piece.

The reader is left with the distinct impression that the final third of this story, picked up and finished after a considerable hiatus, has only been done with the aim of finishing the task and keeping the teacher quiet; the enjoyment and enthusiasm with which it began is lost.

In this day and age, children's awareness of the pictorial symbol is really quite extensive. They may read less of the printed word but they watch instead. Television, with its visual images, is an integral part of our culture.

In addition advertisements are virtually breathed in through the pores. Much has been written about their power but not too much about the increase they have achieved in the understanding of the visual metaphor. The scene is far from being a wholly negative one. It is sad if generations of children are lost to the benefits and pleasures of reading but perhaps we should concentrate on working with the grain. Other skills are acquired, the greatest of which is this tacit understanding of how visual imagery operates, and on quite a sophisticated level. This awareness ought to be explored and exploited so that teachers

actually use it as a way through to the alphabetic symbols of literature and indeed all forms of writing.

When we teach there are aspects of focal and subsidiary awareness to be borne in mind relating to both learner and teacher. If teachers are truly conscious of the tacit knowledge of their charges, though there is precious little evidence of this, or research to guide them, there is also the issue of their own understanding of how they too operate. A fairly superficial probing can reveal just how cognisant children are of the messages from comics and advertisements, not to mention the detailed mimicry they can offer, given the opportunity, but because so much of 'the how' is part of the tacit, the subsidiary awareness, there is little transference to written work. If only we could make better use of symbolic interchange it might enable us to tap into a wealth of awareness and abilities that children possess.

Summary: the early findings.

The issues beginning to emerge here may perhaps be summed up as follows. Integrated studies work often produces successful results partly brought about by the stimulation of interest. If during the course of it drawing and illustration are used, how significant a factor is such

methodology - does it help? There is some evidence to suggest that it does.[10]

Cartoon work is undeniably of assistance in imaginative writing and sometimes in other forms of communication too. However, there is little hard evidence to say why. Perhaps it is just because such drawings avoid the negative associations which can be connected with redrafting and thus fresh attempts are encouraged. Such a medium does have, of course, an obvious appeal to the slightly subversive agenda of comics but, more importantly it explores by using a different symbolism, areas of knowledge which are normally tacit and largely ignored in the classroom.

Six Feet Under with its central character Pete, in both cartoon and written sequel, thus began it all. The initial analysis was interesting, the interchange between written and visual symbol was evident. So too was an emergent visual vocabulary in the cartoon. Symbols were being developed which formed a 'grammar' for the pictures and there was extensive 'description' (visual detail) in the drawings which might translate and enhance the written thought. The use of this particular medium also released touches of humour. The especially exciting aspect of this last element was because of the possibility, given its

[10] Thomas and Silk , An Introduction to the Psychology of Children's Drawings (1990)

functioning patterns, that it might be truly said to relate to metaphor and metaphoric thought. Here then are some of the questions which the empirical section must seek to address but this inevitably throws other issues into relief; namely a need to consider the psychology of thought and of the role metaphor as an active participant in language development not just as a literary trope.

The research questions which were then taken forword into the next empirical phase seemed to be these. First, what kind and degree of interaction occurred between the written mode and the visual one? Secondly how much aid can this way of working give when the textual basics are being taught? Thirdly, how much linguistic colour can it readily add to any subsequent, written narratives and fourthly what benefits can it offer by its much wider overview of text allowing access and variety to modes of composition and greater in-depth understanding of how text 'works' without the need for a wide familiarity with different forms of literature or writing?

It is also important to review the notion of how we perceive, and the approach of different disciplines to this, from people like Gombrich and Arnheim, to the more current theories of Bruce and Green on the physiology, ecology and psychology of perception. The next chapter

begins the process by discussing thought modes which may be beneficial to more active learning.

CHAPTER TWO

Ways of Thinking

Introduction:

Researchers happily study response to literature but only now and again glance fitfully at the role of art in schools. Just occasionally someone like Peter Abbs makes a despairing plea for space for the arts generally, or, even more rarely, a Witkin emerges to argue the need for the 'Expressive Arts' in the education of the whole person.

An examination of the way thinking might be extended and changed through imaginative work in both words and pictures seems rare. When it does occur it is often as part of the preserve of media studies at secondary level (the teacher probably 'borrowed' from the English department especially since the advent of the overloaded National Curriculum) Here the norm seems to be a concern with the mass media which, though it is an important consideration, misses the opportunity for an informed look at other kinds of visual aid in the classroom - diagram, still photo, drawing or painting. The emphasis is placed on how children may be helped to understand and 'read' offerings from film and video and because there are extensive parallels with the reading of literature it is worth considering that, just as there is no child's mind which is a tabula

rasa, so there is no reader who is not a product in part at least of the influences of her or his social background. There is no youthful owner of the 'innocent eye'.

Literary criticism has shown how greatly a work of fiction depends on the 'gap' between the page and the reader. Pictures or films in essence do not allow that space but it often seems that teachers fail to appreciate this. The different media, whatever they have in common, also operate at very different levels. Iser talks at some length about how a work of literature functions, and his work helps to explain something of the nature of this process whereby the image and the discourse are fused by the task of reading.

> .....the reader cannot detach himself from such an interaction; on the contrary, the activity stimulated in him will link him to the text and induce him to create the conditions necessary for the effectiveness of that text.[1]

Sequences of mental images arise as we read but these have to change as new instructions reach us from the written word. The whole ideational and imaginal activity thus necessitates a ready interaction for a reader with a written discourse. (No such flexibility is demanded when watching most films.) In the struggle from the need to make meaning, reader, viewer or listener are always hard at work supplying the missing links, interpreting what they see and hear. Exploring this Henry Widdowson made some

[1] Iser, W., The Act of Reading, (1976, p.9)

useful working distinctions to describe aspects of these operations in *Teaching Language as Communication* -1978.

Widdowson's explanation of illocutionary force helps to uncover the implicit but logical connexions between propositions, it may also help us to explore the tacit meanings which exist in 'gaps' in a text when the teacher is the implied reader.

When he speaks of 'signification'[2] he means meaning as it refers to usage only but 'value' is the communicative use of a sentence. Signification is meaning in the way a sentence has meaning as an instance of usage when it expresses a proposition by combining 'words into structures in accordance with grammatical rules.' The other kind of meaning which he calls value, is what a sentence or even part of a sentence assumes when it is used for a communicative purpose. A sentence may have signification as a sentence but unless it is meaningfully relevant in the context in which it is used it may have no value. That this is a valid distinction is best seen from a practical example.

E.g. May I have my book please?
The cat is.

[2] Widdowson, Teaching Language as Communication, (1978, p.11)

The latter may, as an isolated utterance, make a coherent statement- that is to say, it has signification but it has no value as a response to the question or in its context.

In order to appreciate the value there is often a vital illocutionary act to be performed; that is the inference of logical connections within the setting or context when this is necessary to provide the tacit meaning of a series of propositions. Much attention has been focussed on the role of cohesive devices and their importance with regard to propositional development in writing. John Chapman,[3] working with the benefit of Halliday and Hasan's contribution to this subject, writes of the crucial nature of cohesion and a child's comprehension of its operation. However he omits to examine the coherence which propositions acquire when there has been an understanding and supplying of the illocutionary acts to make those essential connections. In essence, he is really only talking about overtly explicit written cohesion. We need also to be aware of the progress possible when the teacher recognises the textual gap created because the audience *is* the teacher and is thereby able to help the young writer over this hurdle to create a more independently meaningful text.

What he does consider though is "linguistic awareness", which has elsewhere been termed metalinguistic reflection or consciousness in

[3] Chapman, Reading Development and Cohesion, (1983)

young children, reminding us that cognitive advance is probably an extension of the spectator role of language so carefully documented by Ruth Wier in its early stages. [4] Analysis of the metalinguistic forms used by children may offer helpful insights into how they move from one premise to the next and how much a situation does or needs to supply to bridge the illocutionary gap - that is to say, the way young children interpret what is being said. It may also facilitate the gradual development of awareness of how failure to exploit syntactic and semantic cohesion reduces the coherence and effectiveness of the written passage in so many textbooks or worksheets. Widdowson's example neatly clarifies some of these points:-

> The committee decided to continue with its arrangements. Morgan left London on the midnight train."[5]

These two propositions are isolated and unrelated as they stand since there are no apparent semantic or syntactic linguistic signals offering a *cohesive* link between them. Widdowson offers an illocutionary marker, to wit:-

"Morgan,[however], left London on the midnight train." Using this linguistic device he gives the second proposition the value of a qualifying statement and though the nature of the link may not be as obvious as in his much more explicit..... "[The committee decided to continue with its arrangements. (These arrangements required Morgan to remain in

[4] Wier, R., Language in the Crib (1962)

[5] Widdowson, H.G., op. cit., 30-31

London.) Morgan, however, left London on the midnight train.]"..... it is fairly evident that there is an implied connection.

From here it is a very short step to the ways in which, with a minimal dialogue and linking pictures, films will overtly supply what in a written text may be only covertly offered by cohesive devices. On some levels at least, the visual offering makes a child work less hard, though even a relatively superficially applied critique (a simplified structuralist one for example) demonstrates quite quickly just how much it is possible to gain from a film, given heightened critical awareness. Nonetheless I suspect that the majority of visual presentations actually invite, and certainly permit, a more passive approach.

All of this suggests that we need to understand more about the processes by which children bring their own critical faculties to bear, how they respond creatively and that we should provide more opportunities to encourage different approaches to tasks set.

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In an earlier attempt to understand better the relationship between talk and writing,[6] it proved important to establish exactly what was meant by the term metalanguage and what constituted a "cognitive overview"

which was seen primarily as the result of syncretistic rather than analytic thinking. Then, as now, I feel that neither metalanguage nor metacognition, nor ultimately even syncretism, were adequate terms since all are borrowed from other disciplines and all are therefore only approximations. However what they purported to describe was a sense of awareness; awareness of others, awareness of surroundings, awareness of self and above all, an awareness of the interrelated knowledge and of the natural world. Teachers need to allow space for such cognitive development, permitting and encouraging pupils to employ a scanning process which involves, however briefly, both a temporal and conceptual distancing, with a convergence towards an idea containing the nucleus for the expression of future thoughts.

The word syncretism is not used here in its purely Piagetian sense and is borrowed from Anton Ehrenzweig's concept of syncretistic vision. Ehrenzweig writing about children's art had not taken the position of the majority of educationists and psychologists that children's drawings disregard what is actually perceived.[7] He had not assumed in Vygotsky's words that they were more "symbolist than naturalist" but rather that often the process of analytic abstraction alone could hinder a proper view of reality. For too long research has been preoccupied with determining and

[6] Cox, C.A., unpublished MA dissertation

[7] Ehrenzweig, The Hidden Order of Art, (1970, p.29)

explaining levels of abstraction. An analytic ability is obviously necessary in even the simplest thought processes but in order to go further, to reason tautologically, that is to say to form and deliberate about hypotheses, there must be fusion of 'global' and 'analytic' thinking. This idea must then be related to the wider research problem. Learning about learning, especially children's learning, cannot be done in antiseptic laboratory conditions. It has to be done in the midst of the hubbub of daily school life.

Ehrenzweig's thesis was that a "normal view of reality" is not based on the interpretation of pattern but goes directly for the visual object with little interest in its abstract shape.

> In order therefore to make vision into an efficient instrument for scanning our interest in pattern must be suppressed ... recognition of objects from cues rather than from the analysis of abstract detail is the beginning of syncretistic vision. [8]

This syncretistic vision would not be like gestalt, an abstraction of figure from ground and not an analytic vision where detail could obscure object recognition. Perhaps the nearest concrete analogy would be a radar scan, highly sensitive to the smallest significant cue read in relation to the whole.

Ehrenzweig believed that, though global and relatively undifferentiated, syncretism can be extremely precise and sensitive and that although it may neglect what to analytic vision would seem to be important this does

not make it chaotic or unstructured.[8] Before moving towards the significance of such a premise in relation to language it is worth looking at what this writer referred to as an example of properly applied syncretistic vision in an adult artist.

Picasso's portraits even in the stages of apparently arbitrary distortions still allow us accurately to assess likeness and, since they hold together, must do so by a tacit and extremely subtle balance. What is more we judge the verisimilitude of a portrait in the same way that we can recognise a familiar figure in the gathering dusk from a distance, not by analysis of single features but by an overall grasp of the indivisible whole.

The argument presented by psychologists Klausmeier, Ghatala and Frayer is quite different. *Conceptual Learning and Development* concentrated on the crucial link between the visual and verbal fields, concept formation in relation to mere concrete perception. A concept is both an individual's mental construct and an identifiable public entity accepted by a culture or society and necessarily the result of the interaction of personal and social experience. The ability to transfer involves the union of an 'operation' plus content and the factors concerned in understanding a concept, and being able to generalise to all possible instances and

[8] Ibid., 30

[9] Ibid., p. 30 Ibid., 34

discriminate all possible non-instances.[10] Thus a properly assimilated concept is an extremely powerful tool enabling a person to handle new situations effectively calling on past knowledge.

The authors made a distinction in cognitive learning styles talking about the global and analytical dimension. They assessed at what point along the continuum their subjects were and the resultant effect on the efficiency of learning and development of the two cognitive modes. Research seems to show that among children of "adequate intelligence"[11] there are some who more habitually "analyse and differentiate the stimulus field", that "some children are splitters, others are lumpers", and that it is the analysers - the splitters - who are favoured in the learning situation if the IQ is held approximately constant.

In terms of the whole concept of a syncretistic approach, the success of the analytic dimension seemed to be one problem, another was in cross-relating visual and verbal learning in that the visual process appears to concern direct representation but scanning verbal notions involves mediated symbolism and taking account of memory because of the chronological sequence of utterance. Learning thus becomes dependent

[10] Klausmeier, Ghatala, Frayer, Conceptual Learning and Development, (1974, p.166)

[11] Kagan, Moss and Sigel in Klausmeier et al., ibid., 37

on efficient concept formation and storage, initially, of concrete perceptions and later more and more abstract cognitions.

At first sight all this might seem to refute any possibility of the Ehrenzweig thesis being transferred from the world of art to any other form of symbolism and learning. Nor should the place and relevance of abstraction be undervalued; it is vital to the development of the higher levels of thought. Both Moffett's hierarchical taxonomy of abstraction and the elaborated categories in *The Development of Writing Abilities,*[12] offer much that is useful for the analysis of written work. However some physiological support is given to syncretism by E.J.Gibson's theory of perceptual development when she says the neonate possesses both a primary and a secondary visual system.[13] The primary system makes the precise, detailed analysis of form and pattern while the secondary system is concerned with tracking large, perceptually salient objects entering the visual field.

It may also be helpful to consider syncretism in relation to Bruner's spiral curriculum and Vygotsky's notion of the zone of proximal development.[14] The latter is a way of allowing for more than a measurement of the processes completed at a certain age or stage, a child's state of

[12] Britton, J., et al, (1975)

[13] Gibson, E.J., in Flavell, Cognitive Development, (1976, p. 180)

achievement, but also that which is in the course of maturing. Vygotsky stressed analysis of process rather than the object or subject and wanted a developmental approach to psychology in addition to the purely experimental. Phenotypic or phenomenological analysis is based on description, on external features; genotypic analysis is explained on the basis of the origin of a phenomenon. His concern was to study problems developmentally by examining "the causal dynamic basis". A phenotypic approach alone might lead to a misunderstanding because the apparently similar manifestations might have wholly dissimilar origin or cause. A test for example, which measures levels of achievement, reveals only where the children have got to, not the underlying basis of genuine comprehension and it does not show where or how far, given encouragement, they might be able to reach.

It does not seem unreasonable to suggest that the view of development expressed by these psychologists implies that astute analysis is only of value when accompanied by a frequent scanning or syncretistic appraisal.

Bruner's "spiral curriculum", with a cyclical or spiral pattern in learning and development, is where a return is made to the same point but with an increased depth of understanding while Vygotsky's "complex dialectical

[14] Vygotsky, Mind in Society. (1978, p.84)

process" of child development[15] is viewed in much the same terms as Thomas Kuhn viewed scientific development as evolution punctuated by revolution.[16] It is an uneven process with change or sudden metamorphosis; internal and external factors combine to produce qualitative transformation.

> Psychological operations that were achieved through direct forms of adaptation at early stages are later accomplished through indirect means. [There is a] corresponding reconstruction of their psychological processes.[17]

In the end it is the basis or justification for Bruner's claim that ...

> there is no reason to believe that any subject cannot be taught to any child at virtually any age in some form.[18]

At this point, I began to ask why I had not turned sooner to Bruner's notion of intuitive thinking which he says is a very neglected area of productive cognition and especially since he stresses its complementary nature with analytical thinking. He reflects too on the immediacy of its nature when contrasted with mediated cognition and describes it as an implicit not explicit technique which in the final analysis is dependent on formal proof. The intuitive thought is the educated guess and obviously has an element of risk. Bruner is concerned with how far children and their teachers are prepared to take that risk.

[15] Ibid., 73

[16] Kuhn, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions (1962)

[17] Vygotsky, L. S., op. cit., 73

[18] Bruner, The Process of Education, (1977, p. 47)

Can the intuitive thought be directly analogous to Ehrenzweig's perceiver of a figure in the dusk, first the scanning and recognition from cues and then the close-up featural analysis which may verify it? The reason for hesitancy was two- fold. In one of many experiments dealing with aspects of perception Bruner and Potter use blurred photographs brought progressively into focus.[19] Such blurring provides a great deal of interference with recognition and, to make matters worse, wild guessing was encouraged which delayed recognition still further, while apart from the slides themselves there appeared to be no contextual clues. Visual perception in real life is never just an object as in a laboratory, it takes place within a context plus a multiplicity of associations and symbolic meaning. Secondly the use of these blurred photos because of Bruner's overall approach to perception is consistent with his reasoning that perception is based on representations, on a constructed model of reality against which the input is tested. This theory assumes a matching of similarities not so much an increase in discriminative perception.[20]

Ambiguity in concept formation, resultant upon so-called validating criteria which offer uncertain information, also results in delayed validation. Many things clearly affect what we see and how we see, conditioning and practice not least among them.

[19] Bruner, Beyond the Information Given, (1973, p. 84)

[20] Gibson, Principles of Perceptual Learning and Development, (1969, p. 449)

> Art students for example, see the real object- its colour, shape and brightness- less readily, show greater phenomenal constancy than matched individuals with no art training.[21]

....and are perhaps because of their training more inclined to go for the

syncretistic overview,

These reservations apart, intuitive thinking in Jerome Bruner's terms does seem to be the cognitive counterpart of visual scanning if the two can truly be separated, but the plea must stand that there is a need for a different emphasis in consideration of children's drawing and painting and the part which it plays in conceptual development other than the role which Vygotsky, Piaget or Bruner assign to it.

Apart from Witkin in 1974,[22] the most hopeful sign comes from a quarter where it might indeed have been expected. Donald Graves does look at the processes of reading, writing and talking as much more of an organic whole and he talks about the children he works with as though they really are human beings but where drawing is concerned even he does not go far enough.

> A simple example of a sequence is contained in children's general use of drawing in relation to writing. For most children drawing precedes writing since the child needs to see and hear meaning

[21] Bruner, J. S. op. cit., 45

[22] Witkin, R. W., The Intelligence of Feeling, (1977)

through drawing. Later as children know better what they will write, they illustrate after writing.

Sadly he goes on to say "In time they do not need to draw at all."[23]

Chad, the child at the centre of his study, is only six. The average reluctant reader in a British secondary school will be far less cosseted and for him the role of the visual arts will be relegated to television, film, book illustrations and photographs, doubtless of varying quality but all will ask for little more than passive reception. There should be so much more than this. Drawing, illustration, good photography (or not-so-good just so long as both teacher and taught are thoroughly involved in the process) are ways, not just into writing or talking but into conceptual development, into learning.

Research into language has increasingly demonstrated how important context is for meaning. Youngsters, learning to talk read, and write, first make sense of a situation and then bring that understanding to bear on what is being said to them. Only in the sixties in the wake of Piagetian psychology could Chomsky's L.A.D. have gained quite so much credence because the young child was not considered a thinker. However, and this is an important link with art, evidence of the development of talk through the deictic motions in inter-personal relationships was gradually gathered -

[23] Graves, Teachers and Children at Work, (1983)

evidence which also suggested that young children could, and did, show a high degree of sensitivity to another's viewpoint - evidence to which Donaldson added showing again and again that if a child fully understood the question, the ability to "decentre" was not the problem.

It is a pity that having confirmed by experiment and observation features of children's artistic progress which Vygotsky had written of so long before, Lambert Brittain then relies so heavily on Piagetian psychology.[24] He noted how, as motor nerves come under more conscious control, children proceed from random scribbling to more controlled scribbles. His research clearly indicates that often when the scribbles are named orally the marks have actually come first. They are obviously important to their youthful creator appearing to have connotations for the child, not necessarily existing just as visual representations. That a relationship has been grasped and offered between the marks on the paper and the-world-out-there, is a clear move into abstract thought. Sometimes these drawings are representations of "kinaesthetic or tactile sensations" and when the children were encouraged to talk Brittain found that quite amazing fantasies were woven about such forms on the paper, yet they were apparently only minimally related to them.[25]

[24] Lambert-Brittain, Creativity, Art and the Young Child (1979)

[25] Ibid., 31/32

In the assembly of Vygotsky's writing in *Mind in Society* (1978), Vygotsky also recorded that young children name their drawings after completion while older children are able to decide in advance what they are going to draw. The role of language is strong here, it has a planning function and it gives an independence so that the young artist is no longer a slave of the visual field. There is no longer a need to act "in given and immediate space".

Vygotsky elaborates on this. Initially motions are followed by scribbles, that is to say the first 'drawings' are really little more than gestures or deictic indicators, only later do these marks become independent signs. Young children do not really look at the object itself, they draw from memory. Frequently they include things which from a given point of view could not possibly be seen.

Both W. L. Brittain in the seventies and Vygotsky in the thirties note this feature but the conclusions they reach are very different. Pursuing Piaget's concern with decentring, Lambert Brittain demonstrates how, when drawing people eating, children often give a 'top' view of a table showing ...

"each place at the table.... from a different viewpoint". [26] He goes on to say that ....

[26] Ibid., 111

children are not attempting to make a photographic likeness of a particular event when they themselves are removed from it.

Certainly 'x-ray' drawings which show money in pockets or pictures of tables which have four legs no matter what the view point, are all commonly seen - though it is worth asking the average adult to decentre and remember that from a child's height all four legs often are visible!

Research by Norman H. Freeman (1980) in *Strategies of Representation in Young Children* comes out strongly against the notion that children draw what they 'know' or that any drawing could be a direct reflection of how they perceive the world. Early drawing involves a child as a problem solver- in particular of spatial (and therefore relational) problems. Children simply cannot draw what they know, their performance just isn't up to it.

It seems to be accepted that whatever may be the case when children are older, drawing in the early stages is a fairly reliable indicator of reading and writing readiness. Writing and the portrayal of closed shapes develop together. If a child is still scribbling and unable to present closed forms then writing is beyond her and any attempt to force matters is doomed to frustration and failure. Muscle control though, is not the prime factor; success here is to do with the ability to form concepts and portray recognizable objects. This ability is seen as a parallel development in both writing and drawing. Art may be looked on as a purely pleasurable activity but in fact considerable cognitive growth is taking place

paralleling the various stages of mastery; that is to say each progressive artistic step also entails a verbal and conceptual advance.

In the very early stages, both Lambert Brittain and Vygotsky see drawing as a symbolic event. For Brittain the activity is both useful as a record and reminder, and a way of clarifying and organizing that event for a subsequently accessible recall.

> The complex array of features that differentiate one event from another cannot be wholly dealt with verbally at an age when verbal ability is limited.[27]

Children thus resort to drawing which becomes a symbol and record of their assimilation of information. Looking at the same stage but with a different emphasis and assuming that speech is the primary symbolic representation Vygotsky believes that children unburden repositories of memory in drawing in a speech-like mode. That is, they tell a story in pictures and as with verbally recorded concepts they communicate the essential features of objects - treating the drawings themselves as objects. Only later do they make the discovery that "one can draw not only things but also speech." In the mean time the pictures tell the story.

When children are learning to draw or paint a form there is it seems something else at work in successful imitation other than the simple combination of perceptual and motor skills. Despite this there has been for

a long time a strong body of opinion amongst teachers of art that copying adult-made images seriously frustrates creativity. Lambert Brittain cites Russell and Wangaman (1952) and Heilman (1954) in support of this. Gombrich[28] on the other hand reminds us at some length of the venerable tradition of primers for amateurs in *How-to-draw* series which work on the principle of schema and correction. He refers to the "inspired spontaneity" insisted upon by the Chinese despite the artistic traditions of ancient China with their complete reliance upon "acquired vocabularies". There is a need for a basic schema, a knowledge of universals, before one can go out and draw from life which that tradition satisfies. He acknowledges that the tendency of our minds to classify and register experience in terms of the known is a problem for the artist in encountering the particular. The acquired patterns or schema are necessary and useful but they also have a strong influence on how we organize our perceptions and so can also be very limiting.

The example given of a schema for a head (the abstract oval) is itself the abstracted starting point given a willingness to correct and revise, and is a useful measure for the detection of all individual deviations. Even a wrong schema then can be a helpful tool because it is vital to prod our

[27] Ibid. 185

[28] Gombrich, Art and Illusion, (1960)

perception into proper discriminative activity; perception is after all often defined by psychologists as primarily the modification of an anticipation.

It was heartening then to read Eleanor J. Gibson[29] on perceptual learning as long ago as 1969 when she said:

> Some of the old questions that inspired quantities of research now seem wrong, such as does the child see wholes or parts? (It depends, among other things, on the task he is given.)

Later on she enlarges on this in a section called *The Part or the Whole?* in a way which lends credence to Ehrenzweig's notion of scanning.

> Children learn to perceive distinctive features of objects, and so one might be inclined to say that these are parts and that they are being differentiated from a whole. But what kind of whole? Not a whole with intricate structure certainly. It is equally true that the pick-up of structure characterises development, in fact progressively higher order levels of structure and this sounds like progress towards a whole. But the very notion of parts and whole in perception is mistaken; objects are also characterised by structure. Higher order structure creates new units by grouping subordinate units, enabling more information to be handled while reducing uncertainty. Enlarging the chunks might be considered integration of parts and wholes, but we must not forget that there is also progress towards discovery of the most economical and critical set of distinctive features.

Gibson, like Frank Smith stands firmly behind laws of differentiation and filtering and the reduction of uncertainty, not laws of association and external reinforcement. Perception is not, she says, just matching to representation in the head, but a process whereby the invariants in a stimulus formation are extracted. We do not perceive less because we

[29] Gibson, E.J., op. cit., 389

conceive more; what counts is what we pick as information and too much information, too great a redundancy can confuse children.

When Bruner discusses the actual process of the attainment of conceptual or categorial distinctions he reminds us that ...

> *while the experience of 'grasping' (illumination or insight) is sudden, it is embedded in a longer process- still to be described in analytic terms.*[30]

He then offers three basic questions as a guide or informing base from which to begin assessment.

a) How do people achieve the information necessary for isolating and learning a concept?

b) How do they retain the information gained from an encounter with possibly relevant events so that it may be useful later?

c) How is retained information transformed so that it may be rendered useful for testing a hypothesis still unborn at the moment of first encountering new information?

The vast area of rational human behaviour which Bruner examines is explored by attempting to isolate a "measurable" concept and then working as an "experimentalist" controlling the order and type of instances

[30] Bruner, J.S., Beyond the Information Given, 132

which appear, not like a "clinician" who gets his cases as they come.[31] In some cases at least the child in the classroom is in between these two extremes, since how ordered his instances are depends on a variable situation, plus the knowledge and understanding of his teacher. Question b) concerning retention and transformation simply cries out to be examined in the context of the normal 'noise' of every day existence.

The answer to question a) ought to be that in the classroom, that information is provided by the school- rather too hopeful perhaps? Besides, it begs the question of the hidden curriculum. Bruner points out that it makes a vast difference in behaviour whether a child is set to find the "extrapolatable properties"[32] of a concept or is merely trying to remember, in rote-fashion, examples of it if he can. Learning is infinitely more successful in a relevant context when it becomes part of an individual's personal constructs and can be assimilated and accommodated into a meaningful system. Many questions can be raised concerning the relevance and suitability of the materials offered and also the manner in which such information is given, especially when thinking about the conditions affecting concept attainment behaviour.

[31] Ibid., 145

[32] Ibid., 137

Again Bruner raises the vital issues - first in terms of the definition of the task. What, for example, are the objectives as the pupil understands the task? What does pupil 'x' think he or she is supposed to do? What is the exact nature of the instances encountered and how many attributes does each instance exhibit? The manner in which instances are encountered, not to mention their quality as conveyers of sufficient data for a concept to be grasped, are two more highly relevant factors. How readily can a hypothesis be checked and what is the exact nature of motivation? Then follow for most pupils, what must be the 'crunch' questions. What precisely are the consequences of certain categorisations? What is the price to be paid for correct or incorrect assumptions? Then again, the speed at which decisions must be reached is another possible area of restriction for which there must be some allowance made.

All these queries have a tremendous urgency about them concerning the when, the how and the why of conceptual attainment, but it is extremely difficult to measure them in any satisfactory way by reducing the variables involved. Any attempt to approach the problems '*clinically*' and '*scientifically*' inevitably raises issues of artificiality and erroneous response.

Subjects in psychological experiments tend to define the task as one in which their abilities are under test. As a result, error may come to have a consequence that is different from and perhaps more severe than what usually prevails in more private cognitive

> capacity. The effect may be to lead the subject to play safe in his choice of hypothesis or in the instances he chooses for testing.[33]

In other words, behaviour is almost bound to be adversely affected in terms of what we most want to measure.

Bruner singles out at the aspiration level, the difference between ....

> knowing a concept behaviourally (that is being able to distinguish correctly exemplars from non-exemplars) before knowing it at the level of verbal report.[34]

All the evidence points to the two forms of attainment as coming sequentially and, interestingly, the separation of the two is more marked in good problem solvers than poor ones. There is a similar developmental lag between the time when children can talk about something coherently and when they can write about it. The oral report, even a relatively well organised oral version it would seem, is easier than the written one. This should not be a great surprise really as the secondary symbolic system brings with it a host of new problems and rules to be understood.

Of great concern in the process of concept attainment for most children and therefore their teachers, is the business of the relation between a decision made with the resultant consequences and the value which the

[33] Ibid., 139

[34] Ibid., 140

decision-maker, in this case the pupil, places upon the anticipated outcome. Each child's performance then will reflect the value to him of a particular kind of outcome and this in its turn will depend "essentially upon the objectives of the individual." It may well be a valuable exercise to examine the talk and perhaps more especially the writing in these terms.

> The kinds of conditions in which a person works place certain unavoidable restrictions upon the concept attainment strategies which can be used.

This last quoted interest of Bruner's is, as he asserts, "anything but trivial."[35] It underlines all that has been said about trying to measure conceptual stages and progress and is the reason why research has been forced to move from the study of process in "non-naturalistic, laboratory-type communication tasks", towards examining "a wider variety of communicative skills" and a study of "communicative performance in more natural, everyday-life type situations....".[36]

Hopefully at this juncture the argument which began in the realms of art and spatial memory with Ehrenzweig can now be seen firmly in relation to the selection of information and Jerome Bruner's questions about how we learn new concepts stand four square to the classroom situation. The trend of movement away from the studies of learning in experimental conditions

[35] Ibid., 155

towards the position of sociolinguists like Halliday, places the emphasis where it ought to be - on the study in context with the realisation that educational research is not, and cannot be, an exact science.

Right from pre-writing scribbles in the very early years teachers are aware that working with visual materials of all sorts seems to create an enabling effect for some children which in respect of picture narrative may be partially that induced by its strong and obvious links with cartoon and, thereby, humour. Yet important as this may be, there might also be a further cause. The world of Design Technology embracing natural links with maths, science and industry has pursued an avenue which must have great relevance for the representational and plastic arts too. Cross is deeply concerned with an often forgotten but vital aspect of this curriculum area - creativity.[37] His 1984 contribution to *Technology in Schools - Exploring the Curriculum* - fascinates an increasing number of educationists. While we remain dependent on the future development of neuro-scientific research for deeper understanding, work to date raises issues about the possibility of fundamental differences in the modes of thought associated with each of the hemispheres of the human brain.

[36] Flavell, J.H., op. cit., 181

[37] Cross, A.J., Towards an understanding of the intrinsic values of design education, in Technology in Schools - Exploring the Curriculum (1986)

Balchin and Coleman make an educational distinction of an "underpinning" or foundation and superstructure in a school learning situation.[38] There is definitely however a more helpful distinction to be drawn between the content and the structure within which that content is delivered and clearly some areas of the curriculum have a much more specifically defined "content" to be delivered than others. With a preference for the term structure (not superstructure) or medium for delivery, it is, as they suggest,

> *questionable as to whether the commonly accepted underpinnings of literacy, numeracy and verbal articulation provide a wholly adequate foundation or set of media for thought and communication.*

Visual and spatial relationship should be seen, they argue, as an essential complement to literacy and numeracy and they coin the term graphicacy for this visual-spatial aspect of human intercourse.

There is evidence (Gardner and Silver) that recourse to drawing for some children can be instrumental in certain conceptual realisations of experiences and understanding which they are initially unable to verbalize.[39] Archer sets out to make the case for a capacity of imaging where.....

[38] Balchin, Coleman, Graphicacy Should be the Fourth Ace in the Pack, in TES, (1965)

[39] Gardner, Artful Scribbles: the Significance of Children's Drawings (1980)and Silver, Developing Cognitive and Creative Skills through Art, (1978)

> Designers can conjure up in their mind's eye an image or system, can rotate it, and make shrewd judgements about its construction, practicability and worth.[40]

....and that it differs from abstract verbal thought.

> Almost all who try to examine the nature of non-verbal thought end by recording how difficult it is since it is so hard to isolate from the language-linked variety. It is now known that crucial perceptual abilities can be damaged in the first few months of life through lack of environmental stimulation. If visual impairment for example, occurs even temporarily, the infant may suffer tremendous loss of capacity, and for those congenitally blind, areas of brain concerned with vision may be taken over for other sensory functions irreversibly even if it becomes technically possible to restore sight. Thus non-verbal, visual capacities and thought processes which underlie normally developed abilities to read pictorial information or to deduce clues are lost.

Primarily concerned with design education, Cross refers to traditional assumptions that the acquisition of verbal symbols diminishes the importance of sensory perception and concrete experience. He is concerned with the lack of attention given to developing spatial thinking and spatial languages as an aspect of cognitive growth. Just as important

[40] Archer, The Mind's Eye - in The Designer

may be the restrictive effect of such neglect on verbal modes of thought since the youngsters would then lack certain interactive possibilities.

While the left hemisphere primarily specializes in verbal language functions, the right hemisphere is mainly concerned with the visual, spatial, non-verbal or constructional tasks but is not unresponsive to or uncomprehending of, auditory stimuli (including speech). Interestingly though a synthesis is demonstrably necessary for music since the left hemisphere is not solely limited to verbal language functions and such aspects as order, sequence, rhythm, reading/transcribing musical notation, other abstract symbolic representation and co-ordinated and integrated motor control are all left hemisphere based.

The existence of two distinct perceptual systems in the neonate was the neurological support for analytic and syncretistic patterns of thinking and it is further confirmed by research indicating right hemisphere superiority on gestalt perception and that of the left in tasks requiring the isolation of shapes from an irrelevant background, that is to say showing an advantage in perceptual discrimination. Again Levy, Trevarthen and Sperry demonstrate that it is the right hemisphere which can perceive and store in long term memory stimuli which are not easily given verbal labels

and prove resistant to feature analysis - the left hemisphere does not cope well with such tasks.[41]

Nonetheless a straight dichotomy verbal-spatial will not do; the situation is very much more complex than that. Some neurological scientists like the Bogen's J.E. and G.M., have argued that the two hemispheres organize and process information differently, that there are two distinct modes of thinking, one propositional, the other appositional, while others like Bruner (he terms them 'rational' and 'metaphoric') have recognised two distinct types without entering the lateralization argument.[42]

Still others,(Gazzaniga and LeDoux)[43] argue that to stress the dichotomy of function too far is misleading and that though two potentially independent mental systems exist, they work co-operatively in the normal brain and they believe that the left hemisphere's language functions "are developed at the expense of its manipulo-spatial functions." They are at great pains to point out though that appositional modes of thought are by no means exclusively right brain processes - perceptual, spatial and semantic abilities seem to need the co-operative functioning of both halves of the brain.

[41] Levy, Trevarthen, and Sperry, Perception of Bilateral Chimeric Figures -in Brain(1972)

[42] Bogen, and Bogen, The other side of the brain: the corpus callosum and creativity - in Bulletin of the Los Angeles Neurological Societies (1969)

Summary:

The debate is fascinating because it underlines once again the need for flexibility involving both analytic and syncretistic forms of thought with a proper interaction between them. Cross comments, for example ....

> However some spatial problems can be solved in non-spatial ways..., many problems contain analytical as well as synthetic elements requiring the mental rotation of images or the synthesizing or integration of information from different spatial locations (such as the co-operation of perspectives or problems of conservation)....

It is also reminiscent of approaches such as Bruner's intuitive thinking when Franco and Sperry, referring to the observations of Piaget and Inhelder, record that children can detect differing geometric forms at pre-school age even though they are not yet able to report verbally on the discriminating features involved .[44] Even in adults, intuitive thinking comes first, verbal expression follows later.

> An active interaction of the two hemispheres during processing of geometric problems is implied and a similar inter-hemispheric integration would seem reasonable also for other cerebral activities involving spatial intuitions and their linguistic expression.

'Craft, Design Technology' - 'Design Technology'- or simply 'Technology' - whatever the chosen terminology this curriculum area has not been able

[43] Gazzaniga, and Le Doux, The Integrated Mind (1978)

[44] Franco, and Sperry, Hemisphere Lateralization for Cognitive Processing of Geometry - in Neuropsychologia, Vol.15 (1977), 107-114

completely to shake off its 'metalwork, woodwork, craft' image with the adoption of new titles. Certain kinds of skills are still designated manual with the consequent blue-collar label and art and craft in schools fare equally badly. Too little is known about these kinds of activities in relation to the part they play in a learning situation and cognitive development generally.

Cross's concluding remarks[45] therefore can only be wholeheartedly endorsed -

> Many theories of cognitive development indicate that thought is progressed, externalised and directed by the acquisition of a suitable 'language' medium. Although attention has been focussed upon the role of verbal language in this process, the relationship between thought, language and interaction with the environment, is now becoming sufficiently explicit to allow serious questioning as to whether verbal language is the only medium which can be instrumental in the progression of particular thought modes.

[45] Cross, A., op. cit.

CHAPTER THREE

Metaphor and Thinking

Introduction:

Metaphor plays a vital part in the way language develops and changes in a continual search to achieve accuracy of meaning. In the exploration of thought modes and the development of flexibility and creativity metaphoric expression often proves to be the point at which close scrutiny and a more distancing, holistic approach converge to generate fresh concepts - or as Sacks so appositely says it - the distance between meanings which occurs in metaphor helps to offer new insights.

The creative metaphor as defined by Max Black with its primary and secondary subjects offering the third element, his "implicative complex", gives an interaction where the metaphor acts as a filter, the principal subject being seen through the metaphorical expression. To appreciate such an interaction demands both analytic and syncretistic reasoning skills.

Despite what is often seen as the visual content of metaphor, the psychologist Osgood is convinced that metaphor's mediating process is not modality specific so that the perceptual process does not need to

stray into conscious imagery. This compares quite closely with Wolfgang Iser's description of the reading process and moves us quite a long way from Klausmeier, Ghatala and Frayer's very basic notion of what constitutes the percept and perception.

From this point the argument encompasses Paivio's theory of the memory and dual coding and broadly the way in which the visual coding, like syncretistic thought, and so economically effects the wider scanning. At the same time the verbal coding, because of the way it can 'organize discrete linguistic units into higher order sequential structures' can handle the detail of close, dense analysis. That said there must be interaction and overlap. Both Paivio's work on dual-coding and Susanne Langer's stress on the ramifications of, and difficulties with, non-discursive symbolism have important implications for learning.

Next to be considered is Petrie's understanding of how change can be rendered intelligible for the learner and the importance of putting unfamiliar ideas in a familiar context. Whereas a comparative metaphor by instigating comparison extends the learner's constructs, the interactive metaphor creates an anomaly, whose resolution entails a whole conceptual restructuring but a recognizable environment has provided a bridge to the unknown. We can actually see this method in use in the classroom in the work of people like Valerie Walkerdine.

On the literary scene through the writing of Frank Kermode, connections may be made with narrative and metaphorical thought. If almost all language is tropological and the visual aspect of our thinking is co-existent with the verbal, then the argument being presented is that it becomes nonsensical to say that only discursive expression is genuine thought.

Ultimately the clarification of the essence of metaphor has been hindered because most people are attempting to define and explain it in solely linguistic terms when it is surely a multi-modal phenomenon.

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The concept of metaphor has a long and venerable history. It figures importantly in Aristotle's writing where it has credibility and respectability as one of the verbal components of the art of rhetoric. However the philosophic tradition from "British empiricism through Vienna positivism" hasn't always dealt so kindly with it.[1] Hobbes in *The Leviathan*[2] spoke of its use for delight and ornament and its abuse as a fairly transparent attempt to deceive. Locke went further; he saw metaphor as unnecessary and utterly misleading.[3] Rhetoric was anathema to him since it would

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[1] Cohen, T., Metaphor and the Cultivation of Intimacy (Sacks, S., On Metaphor, 1978)

[2] Hobbes, T., The Leviathan, pt. 1 Chap.4

[3] Locke, J., Essay - Bk.3, Chap. 10

> ...insinuate wrong ideas, move the passions and thereby mislead the judgement.

This tradition seems to have changed little from the C17th to the C20th and in Ted Cohen's view the resuscitation of the metaphor's reputation only really gained momentum following the publication of Max Black's *Metaphor.*[4] Indeed the war against metaphor can conjure such imposing names as Plato, J. S. Mill, Bertrand Russell and Whitehead, and in the history, search for, and belief in the validity of a literal or objective language, the "snares and deceits of metaphor" have often been placed in unhappy opposition to cognition so that there is a note of despair in Raymond Williams' complaint that ....

> the fabulous and fictional have not been highly regarded by British philosophers dead or living, nor given much emphasis in our educational system which has been, and still is, obsessed with cognitive development.

Surprisingly in the light of this, the trope's position in academic thinking has assumed such a level of importance that in September 1977 nearly one thousand people had taken part in a multi-disciplinary conference devoted to metaphor and thought and this was followed by a symposium at the University of Chicago in February of the succeeding year. There the distinguished participants were again concerned centrally with the problem of metaphor and many contributed to a publication relating

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[4] Black, M., Metaphor, Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society 55 (1954-55): 273-94

metaphor with science, education and learning, linguistics, psychology and more generally to society and social thinking.

As long ago as 1885 Philip Wegener proposed two general principles of linguistic development. The first he called emendation which he saw as a natural process engendering the syntactical forms of speech, and the second was metaphor, the source of generality.[5] Grammatical structure, he claimed, evolved through the process of emending ambiguous expressions through the modification of the original expression because of the wish to mean more clearly and specifically. Development through emendation has a somewhat familiar ring after Bruner and Cromer on deixis and the weak form of the cognition hypothesis respectively. Deixis implies the acceptance of functional continuity in speech and especially in the speech of the language learner. Bruner is convinced that ostensive indicating for example, provides the prior knowledge necessary for the child to grasp, or in his words, "crack the code of" lexical indicating and eventually understand deictic marking. A gestural pointing to an apple, the uttering of the word 'apple' or the deictic marking of that 'apple' may not be formal glosses of each other, but they are continuous. Wegener's emendation began from the single-word sentence and the gradual supplementation and modification, first with demonstratives, then with other parts of speech to form a complex grammatical structure. And all

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[5] Wegener, P. in Langer, Philosophy in a New Key, (1978, pp.136-140)

this brought about by the need for clarification lest the speaker be misunderstood.

As regards metaphor his theory runs as follows :- lacking a precise word to highlight a novelty a speaker will choose a word which denotes something else that is a presentational symbol for the thing he means when the content makes it clear that he cannot mean the thing literally denoted and must mean something else symbolically. Wegener introduced the term 'faded metaphor' and proffered the notion that all general words are probably derived from specific designations. Certainly a very cursory glance at just the recent literature on metaphor makes it patently obvious how difficult it is for even the most transactional of prose to avoid some kind of metaphorical usage. Stressing that the fundamental drive of language is to mean and that this is a continuous process of adjustment and playing with words seems so obvious, yet it has not always been done.

Within literary traditions, always a safe haven for belief in metaphorical language, C. Day Lewis drew attention to how a modern critic as reader of poetry would expect to gain from 'collision' rather than 'collusion' in a work but Karsten Harries (a Yale philosopher)[6] believes that the preference for tension and the emphasis on metaphor of opposition and collision is

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[6] Harries, K., The Many Uses of Metaphor in Sacks, On Metaphor, (1978)

almost exclusively a modern phenomenon since this tendency has not always been characteristic of poetry and criticism. The cross-fertilisation from linguistics and the influence of structuralism with its criticism of binary oppositions may well serve to support this thesis and it also seems probable that though this 'collision' has offered much, a certain lack of 'collusion' in current approaches to poetry may have lost us considerable insight.

The study of metaphor in recent years has undeniably gained ground and taken root in many fields other than philosophy and literary theory. Andrew Ortony's distinction between what he terms 'constructivist and non-constructivist' views of language and thought helps to clarify something of the wider aspects.[7] In the former, the constructivist position, metaphor is deemed an essential characteristic of language. Meaning must needs be constructed from an interaction of the linguistic information plus both the context within which it is given and the knower's pre-existing knowledge so that the belief which had so flourished under the doctrine of logical positivism whereby a literal language could offer a precise and unambiguous description of reality was challenged. With it began an erosion of the notion that there is or can be, a literal-figurative distinction or a clear dividing line between literary theory or non-literary text. The semioticians opened the floodgates; if the language of the scientist was in

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[7] Ortony, Metaphor and Thought, (1979, p.1ff.)

essence no different from that of the poet the implication that followed was that "*all language is tropological.*"

In the concern for the reappraisal of metaphor Max Black's text *Models and Metaphors,* by no means the first such plea, is nonetheless a seminal one which despite some of Searle's criticisms, presents a very useful paradigm. It stresses metaphoric legitimacy because of its emotive nature while still acknowledging a metaphor's value as cognitive object. There must be more to a truly creative metaphor than mere substitution or comparison; it must be genuinely inter-active and in that inter-action lies its power.

By the time he had reprinted his 1977 article *More about Metaphor*[8] the theory behind it had been summarised neatly for us by William Taylor into five basic propositions running roughly as follows; first there are two distinct subjects, primary and secondary.[9] Secondly the secondary subject signals the existence of a system of relationships known as the implicative complex. Thirdly the metaphor works by projecting this implicative complex upon the primary subject. In the fourth instance a process of selection and emphasis is at work linking the primary subject to particular aspects of the implicative complex and finally the interaction takes place

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[8] Black, M., More About Metaphor (Ortony, A., Metaphor and Thought)

[9] Taylor, Metaphors of Education, (1984)

because the presence of the primary subject incites the reader or hearer to select some of the secondary subject's properties. Thus he constructs a parallel implicative complex that can fit the primary subject with reciprocally induced parallel changes in the secondary subject.

Black claims that his first proposition just simply is not compatible with the simplest forms of substitution view and that because the whole notion depends on systems of "associated implications" related to the subject and applied to the principal subject, the comparison view also fails to be adequate.[10] But in the end he acknowledges that in more 'trivial' cases of metaphor, substitution and comparison views are often 'nearer the mark' than interaction views, since what substitution and comparison metaphors offer can be replaced by literal translation without loss of cognitive content. At times therefore they may be closer as an explanation of what is actually happening in particular instances of figuration than his own contention of interactivity.

There is an insistence in Black's paper[11] that when we talk about metaphors we are dealing in semantics and so.....

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[10] Black, Models and Metaphors, (1972, p.46)

[11] Ibid., 28

> to call a sentence an instance of metaphor is to say something about its meaning, not about its orthography, its phonetic pattern or its grammatical forms.[12]

I.A. Richards' terms tenor and vehicle [The Philosophy of Rhetoric] are abandoned because they relate to two interactive 'ideas' or 'thoughts' and consequently Richards lapses into talking about things instead of a complex of ideas related to primary and secondary subjects. In place of these Black distinguishes between frame and focus because the presence of a particular frame or semantic context can result in a sentence which is a metaphor while another frame does not and he gives the example - "The chairman ploughed through the discussion." - where 'ploughed' as the focus has undeniable metaphoric usage.[13] A different frame brings about a different interplay as in - "I like to plough my memories regularly." - even if the differences are insufficient to justify these as two completely distinct metaphorical examples. To expand the concept of the interaction he offers us "the metaphor as filter" where the principal subject is 'seen through' the metaphorical expression - where the expressions filters and transforms, selects and even highlights certain aspects that might otherwise pass unnoticed.[14]

To recap, the interaction theory as opposed to a substitutive theory can loosely be summarised in this way - a metaphor causes us to apply a

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[12] Ibid., 47

[13] Ibid., 27

"system of commonplaces" associated with the metaphorical word to the subject of the metaphor. Thus in "Man is a wolf." we bring to bear our knowledge of the commonplace attributes- the stereotypes of the wolf- to man. The metaphor, Black says, thus .....

> selects, emphasizes, suppresses and organises features of the principal subject by implying statements about it that normally apply to the subsidiary subject."

He firmly resists the possibility of a literal paraphrase involving the idea of similarity or analogy and so equating metaphor with simile. Paraphrases fail, not because the metaphor does not have special cognitive content but because the paraphrase he says,

> will still not have the same power to inform and enlighten as the original..... one of the points I most wish to stress is that the loss in such cases is a loss of cognitive content; the relevant weakness of the literal paraphrase is not that it may be tiresomely prolix or boringly explicit or deficient in qualities of style; it fails to be a translation because it fails to give the insight that the metaphor did."[15]

The traditional view of metaphor is the substitution view and it is claimed that those who wish to detract from the force that metaphor can have, focus on trivial examples to make their point. Black is concerned that such examples are a comparison view - merely a modified form of the substitution theory. Depreciators go for a reductionist approach - that is to

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[14] Ibid., 41

say a simile is an explicit comparison, a metaphor an implicit one and the reason we recognise that the assertion whatever it is, is a metaphor, is that a literal interpretation is clearly false or totally inappropriate. In many instances this view of what happens may well be correct and the metaphor will work none the worse for that since metaphors frequently are used to make comparisons in this way.

However quoting Ortony:

> A metaphor is a kind of use of language, whereas a comparison is a kind of psychological process, which while quite possibly an essential component of certain kinds of language use, is not the same thing as such a use.[16]

He then goes on to point out that even if you reduce a metaphor almost to the level of simile by claiming the former to be implicit comparison and the latter explicit, you are still not dealing with literal language - the 'problem' of metaphor is still not solved. Max Black hitting out at those who would decry his interaction theory argues that the comparison theory is terribly vague and that if one believes the primary and secondary subjects are merely juxtaposed to allow similarities and dissimilarities to be noted, it is simply a matter of treating "metaphors as perversely cryptic substitutes for literal similes" so their distinctive power and effectiveness is sacrificed.

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[15] Ibid., 46

[16] Ortony, A., Metaphor and Thought, 188

There is clearly a problem developing here as to whether metaphors can be explained solely in terms of semantics, and more particularly, how they relate to speech acts - those utterances which do not report or 'constate' anything. Such sentences were termed performative not constative by the philosopher Austin. Confusion arises because a sentence also says 'something'. That is, it has propositional meaning - that 'bit' being the propositional act and then at the same time it performs its illocutionary act (the speech act), promising, warning, apologising, stating and so on.

It is worth trying to clarify the nature of what is meant by 'speech acts' in order to see their relation, if any, to metaphor. Ultimately philosophy seems to have argued itself into saying that in saying anything one is performing some kind of act - it is perhaps another acknowledgement of the power of the 'need to mean'. Even simple active verbs are expandable into the form - I state that I + present simple active verb - and have therefore an underlying performative function. [17]

Professor Palmer, with what would seem to be a heartening piece of common sense, objects that "I state, I ask and I order that" are reports of statements, questions and commands and are handled quite adequately in traditional grammar where they are labelled 'indirect'. He terms it "putting the cart before the horse", (nice of him in the circumstances to

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[17] Palmer, Semantics, (1976, p.137-143)

use a metaphor) and points out that they, as reports, are derived from direct statements not the other way round and that "to give an order, for example, is not the same as to specify that one is giving an order." In any case the meaning is different and reducing all sentences in this disguise to statements does not help at all since language clearly consists of orders and questions as well as statements.

Palmer distinguishes five broad categories of performative linguistic utterance. The first is his notion of a true performative where the action is achieved by the words alone - "I name this ship...." or "I give and bequeath my watch to my brother." In the second, calls (i.e. bids) in card games like bridge, or the umpire's edict "No ball", establish a contract within the rules of the game. The third class, which is where promising and warning and so on, come in, does not seem to demand the presence of the performative verb to ensure the illocutionary force. You can for example warn - teachers do it all the time - without the use of the verb to warn. In the fourth category "the modal verbs shall and may/can are used to make promises and give permission (and must to lay obligation/." The fifth class, where the example given is "There is a bull in the field." proves the most problematical. There is no overt indication of what kind of speech act this is - a warning, a boast or just an informational offering....? That a speech act may seem in its form to be a bid, a commitment in bridge and is also covertly a warning or invitation to a partner is yet

another problem. Moreover does, or should, intonation play a part in designating interrogatives for example?

So, with all utterances in the end declared performative, Austin defined three acts which can be, and are, in many instances 'performed' simultaneously:- locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary. He gives the following examples:

> 1) the locutionary act- He said to me "Shoot her." - meaning shoot and shoot her. 2) the illocutionary act- "He urged (advised, ordered) me to shoot her." And lastly, 3) the perlocutionary act - "He persuaded me to shoot her."

The locutionary act is interpreted in terms of the actual act of saying, the illocutionary act through its force (the act performed in saying something) and the perlocutionary act, which is performed by, or as a result of saying something, and is least under the control of the speaker since it is achieved by the effect of the utterance on the mind of the listener. [18]

Thus there may be an unintended or secondary result of the perlocutionary act which is its sequel and not the intended object.

Donald Davidson, in company with others, attempted to forge speech act links with metaphor. He suggested that anybody making a metaphorical remark is performing a distinctive speech act whose force is

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[18] In Coulthard, An Introduction to Discourse Analysis, (1977, p.17)

to say that..... "I draw your attention to a likeness between (say) metaphor and dreamwork."[19] The effect of metaphor according to Davidson's paper is more to do with Austin's perlocutionary force - that is an act performed by, or as the result of, saying something metaphorically - and he shows more interest in this than in the illocutionary force of a metaphorical utterance.

> It is no help in explaining how words work in metaphor to posit metaphorical or figurative meanings, or special kinds of poetic or metaphorical truth. These ideas don't explain metaphor, metaphor explains them. Once we understand a metaphor we can call what we grasp the metaphorical 'truth' and (up to a point) say what the 'metaphorical meaning' is. Literal meaning and literal truth conditions can be assigned to words and sentences apart from particular contexts of use. This is why adverting to them has genuine explanatory power.

He places strong emphasis on the distinction between what words mean and what they are used to do. If metaphors are perlocutionary acts or behave like perlocutionary acts they also do not report or constate anything; they also are not true or false in that sense and Davidson's arguments concerning literal and metaphorical truth do not get us very far,[20] especially as he then says:-

> Metaphor makes us see one thing as another by making some literal statement that inspires or prompts the insight. Since in most cases what the metaphor prompts or inspires is not entirely, or even at all, recognition of some truth or fact, the attempt to give literal expression to the content of the metaphor is simply misguided. The

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[19] Black, M., Afterthoughts, in Sacks, On Metaphor, 188 and fol.

[20] Davidson, D., What Metaphors Mean, in Sacks, S., On Metaphor, 31

> theorist who tries to explain a metaphor by appealing to a hidden message, like the critic who attempts to state the message, is then fundamentally confused. No such expectation or statement can be forthcoming because no such message exists...[21]

This feels remarkably like a return to the literary critics' contortions with *The Figure in the Carpet* for, though one is tempted to agree that at one level this is what metaphor does, it has been reduced to something ineffable or discursively inexpressible and the theory still fails to show how metaphors work and why they are the undoubted resource and inspiration that they are.

Another major problem in relation to speech acts occurs when the speaker is soliloquizing. What is a speaker doing, asks Black, when, in that mode, he expresses the remark "Metaphor is the dreamwork of language"? He tells us that Davidson's proposal that he is 'nudging' himself to pay attention to the likeness seems oddly vague in that the very expression suggests that the soliloquizer has done just that! A soliloquy may be a speech act but the metaphor within is surely the informational content of meaning and not a speech act itself? Even if this point is allowed, it does not appear to negate the possible perlocutionary force a metaphor might have in every other context. Black feels that the whole of Davidson's argument is the comparison theory again in thin disguise. The

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[21] op. cit., 45

whole tension essential in a working, interactive metaphor's implicative complex of ideas and possibilities is lost in such reductions as his suggestions would involve.

I must confess that my problem here is that I find it hard to defend one of the very metaphors which Black offers for examination against Searle's charge that this is a comparison metaphor. To wit - "Marriage is a zero-sum game."

> Marriage is like a zero-sum game in that it is an adversary relationship between two parties in which one side can benefit only at the expense of the other.[22]

"It is hard to see what the talk about interaction is supposed to add to the analysis".... is Searle's reply. Would Black wriggle and claim that he had used a trivial example?

When Wegener proposed metaphor as one of his general principles he offered an explanation of how he thought it operated but gave little thought as to why it arises as a phenomenon in communication at all; it was just a feature of what happens in the overall struggle to mean. Paivio describes three hypotheses all of which are of interest.[23] One stated that a metaphor enables us to express experiences which cannot be described

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[22] Searle, J., Metaphor, in Ortony, Metaphor and Thought, 123

[23] Paivio, A., Psychological Processes in the Comprehension of Metaphor, Ortony, A., op. cit.,152

literally - the inexpressibility hypothesis; another that whole areas of information can be converted or transferred from the vehicle to the topic (in Black's terms the principal subject is 'seen through' the metaphorical expression, i.e. is effectively filtered), and the third that ....

> perhaps through imagery metaphor provides a vivid and, therefore, memorable and emotion-arousing representation of perceived experience.

What of course does happen with a successful metaphor is that a novel conceptual entity arises from apparently discrete parts.

Paivio's account of psychological processes at work in the comprehension of the metaphor is intriguing both with regard to what has already been said and explored and also later aspects of this paper because he looks at imagery and perceptual experience.

> Metaphor is our most striking evidence of abstractive seeing, of the power of the human mind to use presentational symbols ...

says Susanne Langer, thus offering the nature of perception itself, the 'abstractive seeing' as the origin of metaphor.[24] Paivio refers to an experiment in which paintings were shown in pairs in different combinations. The change of combination often had quite a determining effect on the perception of the remaining picture. The pairings of the

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[24] Langer, S., Philosophy in a New Key, 14

images foregrounded a common quality thus achieving a perceptual abstraction without losing the context from which it arose.[25]

The psychologist Osgood assumed that the mediating process in metaphoric comprehension is rather abstract than modality-specific and interestingly his work began with the analysis of synaesthesia and from the proposition that the affective reaction system is of a highly generalised nature "independent of any specific modality and yet participates with all of them."

In this way he is moving away from the more traditional analysis where metaphor is seen in terms of perceptual imagery of an abstract nature - the kind of approach taken by Langer and Arnheim for example. Other sensory modalities are embraced since Osgood believes the basis for similarity in synaesthesia and in metaphor is found "in common affective reactions roused by different sensory stimuli and by words."[26] One sensory modality "is easily and lawfully translated into another." These common and affective reactions are abstract in the sense that they are independent of "particular sensory modality", as well as in the sense that the representational affective reactions themselves are assumed to be abstractions of reactions originally made to things.

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[25] Paivio, A., in Ortony, A., op. cit.,156

[26] Ibid., 159-166

Paivio explains how we use such continua and scales as, fast-slow, hard-soft, weak-strong, to rate concepts of tremendous diversity as for example, mother and democracy, that we simply must be using them in a metaphorical way, and on the whole, within a particular culture we very largely agree in our 'metaphorical' interpretation of the relationship between the concept and the chosen scale. Without such agreement there would be little communication.

Quite a lot of recent work on the psychology of metaphor processing has looked at the similarity (or lack of it) between juxtaposed nouns and their related epithets but a number of researchers seem to have come to the conclusion that the ...

> elementary cognitive features and integrated representations involved in the metaphor research may be .... decomposable into different components including verbal associative and imagistic mechanisms, and each might play a role in metaphor comprehension....

Though stress is often placed on the perceptual basis of metaphor processing, this does not mean that "the perceptual process 'spills over' into conscious imagery."

What Paivio examines is the nature of the process and its relation to memory. He proposes a dual-coding approach combining the imagery and verbal associative views assuming both to be involved and necessary in language and thought. The imagery system deals with information concerning concrete objects and events and the verbal system deals with

linguistic information. These two are independent but inter-connections allow information to be transferred from one to the other. The really important difference from the point of view of later arguments is that difference in quality where the imagery system constructs ....

> synchronously organized, integrated informational structures, analogous to the continuous structural layout of the perceptual world.... *and* The verbal system organizes discrete linguistic units into higher order sequential structures.

He is convinced that together the two systems contribute co-operatively

but independently to the task of metaphor comprehension. They...

> provide the cognitive mechanisms for conveying continuous experiential information, using a discrete symbol system.

In an associative learning task the availability of verbal images actually increases verbal recall. Concrete words evoke images whereas abstract words have to be rehearsed and learnt. He records that where dual coding is involved subject imaginal mediators are sometimes related metaphorically to memorised items - by which he means images are linked to the vehicle by a process of metaphor to aid memory. What appears to be happening is that with the use of these metaphorically linked 'mediators' abstract information has been concretized. Furthermore Katz and Paivio's experiments in 1975 with concept learning tasks showed that the imaginary value of the conceptual categories (i.e. high - like "a four-footed animal", or low - like "an optical instrument") as well as the imagery instructions - whether or not to use visual images to aid learning -

facilitated concept acquisition. The deduction they made from this was that the addition of "high imagery conditions increased the probability that concept learning would be mediated by either imaginal or verbal representations, or both." This has strong relevance for the interpretative or interactive power of metaphor because "such interpretation is analogous to concept discovery." They conclude too that verbal conditions encouraging image arousal also facilitate concept discovery.

There is also some supporting evidence about the power of the visual format from another source - Trabasso (1975). When psychologists talk of transitive inference it is generally assumed that a process occurs which involves a high level of abstraction. However in actual fact people often have recourse to a perceptual strategy which does not involve any kind of logical deduction at all. Quite simply given the problem A> B >C>D>E and asked to comment on the length or mass of B say, in relation to C, a subject may simply read off a personal mental image . Flavell tells us that if the process used were logical inference, questions about more widely separate pairs ought to take longer to answer than any adjacent or previously experienced ones but in fact research has shown that they do not. [27]

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[27] Flavell, Cognitive Development, (1976, p. 226-229)

Trabasso's research does not show though that inferential processes are always replaced by quasiperceptual ones *but,* says Flavell, it must change the way in which,

> by identifying some plausible underlying processes, he has helped us to understand what 'transitive inference' might really refer to psychologically.

If the operation of such processes is linked with the notion of dual coding the power of metaphor and metaphoric reasoning is more readily appreciated. Moreover if we then encourage children to use transformations into different modalities when thinking and, in particular to take advantage of the economy of the visual form this must surely encourage and assist the development of metacognition.

Images in the mind however are rarely 'picture constructions' as on a page, and are not really internal pictures - though they may be. Asked about any book I possess for example, I actually 'see' it - colour, shape, pattern, cover design, together with its position on the shelf (chair or floor), though I cannot always recall the writing on it and hence may have difficulty with the title or author, though rarely the content. This however, I see as different from reading a novel. Like most people I find the images flexible to the point of having no shape. I can only say categorically what things are not like and for some time now research has been working hard to move away from the idea of a clear mental image [see Anderson 1976, Pylyshin 1973].

So far, so good but there is a warning note. Following a general assumption that "imagery provides an additional (subjective) referential context for the interpretation of a sentence" it seems reasonable to suggest that imagery can play a similar role in comprehending a metaphor but the imagistic "context could be inappropriate if it draws attention to its literal aspects rather than the metaphorical ones."[28]

There are further problems to do with the relation of metaphors and imagery and care must be taken because of what Ricoeur calls "the enigma of iconic representation ... the way in which depiction occurs in predicative assimilation."

Clear discrete images enabling us to 'possess' the absent object or thing are a distraction to the process of metaphoric creation of similarity, and probably also to our understanding of narrative. Is this then perhaps why, when asked to describe a character in a book they know well, readers generally find the task quite difficult and yet when a film of a book is shown, for most of us a common response is to say that it wasn't how we 'saw' the characters at all. It is not just that the visual reality is different or that the producer or actors' interpretation is not ours but also that had our images been harder, more concrete, less of an amorphous flow, they

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[28] Paivio, A., Psychological processes in comprehension, in Ortony, A., Metaphor and Thought,163-170

would have interrupted the narrative's working on us and been a distraction, even interruption to our reading.

> To imagine then, is not to have a mental picture of something but to display relations in a depicting mode. Whether this depiction concerns unsaid and unheard similarities or refers to qualities, structures, localisations, situations, attitudes or feelings, each time the new intended connection is grasped as what the icon describes or depicts.[29]

It seems entirely possible that mental images 'translated' into 'real' internal pictures do for the thinker what turning graphic symbols into sound and only then into meaning does for the reader - hence the distraction.

Imagery as a factor in memory storage and retrieval seems to have a number of distinct advantages to bestow, especially when it's integrated with the linguistic or verbal system. As an example, Begg in 1972, showed how a phrase like "the white horse" (a high memory phrase) occupied half the memory space of an abstract phrase such as "basic theory"[30] His explanation was that the former was a concrete phrase which established a holistic long term image -that is of a horse which is both a horse and white. To clarify the relation between this and a metaphor Paivio cites "A metaphor is a solar eclipse" and where one might wish to argue with the strength of an eclipse as an analogy for metaphor , the visual image of the

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[29] Iser, The Implied Reader, (1974)

[30] Paivio, A., in Ortony, A., op. cit.166

darkened centre and its surrounding halo eliciting the opposed features of light and obscurity is a compelling one. This flexibility in image storing and processing also makes for speed and efficiency when searching for relevant information and must be an added advantage in heuristic processes of creation and invention.

Somewhere in the notion of a clash, in the creation perhaps of a hitherto unseen connection of a vivid, visual mnemonic, is the essence of an interactive metaphor and Ricoeur makes a further attempt to uncover the process. Metaphor, in Black's theory he suggests, is much more than lexical deviance.[31] The substitution theory won't do because though there may indeed be a deviance at word level there is an interaction between the logical subject and a predicate. If it were only at word level the trope would be metonomy. "If metaphor consists in some deviance.... this deviance concerns the predicative status itself."

What happens is that the relevance or pertinence of the normal code of ascription of predicates has been violated. This is termed syntagmatic deviance and the metaphorical statement actually works towards the reduction of that syntagmatic deviance by creating new meaning - new semantic pertinence. Cohen then turns the argument back to the original classical rhetoricians' definition of metaphor by saying that the wheel has

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[31] Ricoeur, P., The Metaphorical Process, in Sacks, S., op. cit.,143 and fol.

come full circle- that the new pertinence or meaning has been achieved by high-lighting the lexical deviance (a paradigmatic one)! A rather tortuous route so that it can be said that classical rhetoric was right as far as it went but it only dealt with sense at the level of the word whereas ... "the production of sense is borne by the whole utterance."

However for Ricoeur this is still only half the story about metaphor's innovative nature. The crux of the matter is the new meaning or congruence which it establishes in order that....

> the utterance 'makes sense' as a whole. The maker of metaphors is this craftsman with verbal skill who, from an inconsistent utterance for a literal interpretation, draws a significant utterance for a new interpretation which deserves to be called metaphorical because it generates the metaphor not only as deviant but as acceptable.[32]

Taking this theoretical standpoint, Ricoeur then tries to examine first how resemblance works within this meaning-producing situation, and secondly, just how the pictorial or iconic moment connects with this resemblance. The resemblance referred to is either the objective similarity between the subject and its predicate or the subjective similarity between the attitudes linked to the grasping of these things. It is the 'seen' resemblance presumably, which brings about the 'new' meaning. The meaning in a metaphor doesn't just "consist of a semantic clash but of the new predicative meaning which emerges from the collapse of the literal

meaning..." Ricoeur hastily covers himself by adding that this 'collapse' only happens if we are solely reliant on the common or usual values for those words.

At the point of the mutation, the change of meaning which allows a semantic innovation, is the point where similarity and imagination must operate.[33] Ricoeur rejects the notion of a trace or 'perceptual residue' or an alternation between two modalities of association either by contiguity or similarity because both of these are an imposing from the outside and the way that imagination and similarity function in an effective metaphor has to be intrinsic, immanent - from the inside - and a part of "the freshness of semantic innovation itself." The term he uses for this productive character of the insight which is metaphor is predicative assimilation and it is not just an association by resemblance - it is a making similar of the terms in the metaphorical utterance. This is seeing "the same in spite of and through the different." Imagination then, is this ability to produce new kinds by assimilation and to produce them not above the differences as in the concept, but in spite of and through the difference.

To help explain the transition between literal incongruence to metaphorical congruence and the concomitant interaction he uses a

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[32] Ibid., 144

[33] Ibid., 144/5

metaphor of space and it is this exciting metaphor which limns so beautifully a fundamental leaming process. "It is as though," he says, "a change of distance between meanings occurred within a logical space." This new congruence emerges from the semantic proximity between the subject and predicate in spite of their distance. The shift is one of logical distance from far to near between meanings. Remote concepts, now seen closer, offer a shift in semantic proximity and a 'rapprochement' showing a generic kinship between heterogeneous ideas. Imagination is the catalyst, the effector of the shift. It is the insight which is both a thinking and a seeing.

If this is related to the earlier argument in respect of the need in all learning contexts to be able to alter focus employing close-up and distancing vision (analytic and syncretistic approaches) then metaphorical language use is crucial in that it allows the thinker to escape from a narrow, myopic tunnel, to 'see' afresh, grasping a new idea both in spite of, and through, and even because of, the difference. The tension which is metaphor offers genuine understanding - further insight.

Professor Petrie intrigued by the possibilities of metaphor as an educational tool asks how do we learn about something totally new? He returns to Plato's paradox in the *Memo,* namely that it is extremely difficult, perhaps impossible to enquire about what is known or what is unknown. In the first instance if something is to be believed, to be 'known', then why is there

need to make enquiry and if it is unknown then how should any enquiry be possible? Referring to Piaget's 'assimilation and accommodation' it is the latter process where we learn by changing our concepts and modes of comprehension to fit our understanding when, to use George Kelly's terms, we have permeable not rigid constructs.[34]

> If understanding and learning involve being able to put that which is learned in a context then how can we ever rationally come to change our contexts of understanding? It seems that we would either have to presuppose that we already possess at least implicitly, the context which renders intelligible the radically new thing we are attempting to learn, or else we would either have to presuppose that the learning of something radically new is arbitrary and subjective.[35]

It is this crucial difficulty to which Petrie offers the metaphor as an epistemological bridge between what is already known and radically new knowledge. Bollinger is similarly exploring its function when he says...

> If all that we can know and talk about is ultimately in terms of something else and that is in turn shaped by childhood gropings for connections grounded firmly enough in impressions of space, touch, size, notion, direction and balance to hold them steady and enable an uncertain mind to grasp them, then our assurances come more from finding that our own reality is shared by others than from the security of its own anchors. Metaphor is at work, but it has been at work in the past and brings us a world to some extent prefabricated in our own language.[36]

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[34] Ibid., 145-7

[35] Petrie, H.G., Metaphor and Learning, in Ortony, op. cit., 440-441

[36] Kelly, A Theory of Personality, (1963, p.79/80)

Petrie is deeply concerned with the devices and processes involved which allow the jump from assimilated knowledge to the breaking of completely fresh ground and suggests that analogies, models, theories and exemplary problem solutions also help to make 'new' knowledge accessible allowing the learner to change her concepts or modes of understanding.[37]

Jerome Bruner's contemplation of the imaginative leap and intuitive thinking also grapples with this area of human learning. The 'leap' is only possible if the learner has ...

> familiarity with the domain of knowledge involved and with its structure, which makes it possible for the thinker to leap about, skipping steps and employing short cuts in a manner that requires a later re-checking of conclusions by more analytic means whether deductive or inductive."[38]

The bridging of this knowledge 'gap' comes when the learner can utilise both analytic and syncretistic modes of thinking.

Bruner discusses what he calls the element of surprise consequent upon a creative act - an effective surprise which often seems to have "the quality of obviousness about it." He suggests, after looking across the curriculum at art, maths, science and literature that all forms of surprise grow out of combinatorial activity from "....a placing of things in new perspectives."

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[37] Op. cit.,440

[38] Aspin, A., Metaphor and Meaning in Educational Discourse, in Taylor, W., Metaphors of Education, 32

Metaphoric combination in language goes beyond the literal placing of things in a system of concepts or categorising. He also shows how narrative or drama can often be an extended form of metaphoric activity citing Anouilh's *Antigone* where Creon is both tyrant and reasonable man - diverse experiences joined "by the mediation of symbol and metaphor and image."[39]

Petrie remains, he says, unsure whether this "central epistemic role of rendering intelligible changes in cognitive structure" should be elaborated to a new principle whereby all the devices mentioned, analogy, model, theory, exemplary solution and so on, are, or should be, seen as a form of metaphor, but the way in which he goes on to look at the role of metaphor in the acquiring of new knowledge is especially intriguing when placed alongside the ways in which children work with metaphor, simile and analogy, often in anecdotal or narrative form to explain ideas to others.[40]

He refers us again to Black's distinction between comparative and interactive metaphor. The difference between the explicit comparison of simile and analogy and the implicit comparison of metaphor is acknowledged but in comparative metaphor meaning and

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[39] Petrie, H.G., in Ortony, op. cit., 441

[40] Bruner, Beyond the Information Given, 209 and fol.

understanding is transferred, a "given cognitive structure" is present which "renders that comparison sensible." It can extend already existing knowledge but it does not offer a new form of understanding. The interactive metaphor however, if it can indeed create similarities through the power of its imagery, then could offer the bridge between current conceptual and representational schemes and those which must follow in unfamiliar subject matter to be learned or encompassed by the student.

Sometimes he tells us, metaphor can be comparative for the teacher (who already knows all the subject matter to be explained) and interactive for the student who has yet to make the necessary conceptual leap. In which case, the distinction between a comparative and interactive metaphor is as much to do with the power of the words on the listener and cannot be identified independently of its use. It was this thinking which turned Petrie back to the realms of speech acts, aware though he is that the existing typology does not encompass metaphor. The connection that he makes however, is with the speech act of making an assertion, since assertions are automatically judged in the truth/falsity domain. When the anomaly or problematic situation happens to stimulate re-adjustment or the creation of similarity through metaphor it is as a result of a similar true/false assessment. Since metaphor, in common with some of the other symbolic generalisations mentioned previously, can effect changes in cognitive structure in this way, it allows the learner to pass from familiar to unfamiliar ground and offers us all a crucial "mechanism for

changing our modes of representing the world in thought and language."[41]

To recap then on his position; ordinary learning brings thought and action in a literal guise to bear on a problem in order to resolve it. With a comparison metaphor the premise is literally false so an implicit comparison is made and the learner's cognitive structure extended, while with an interactive metaphor the problem is seen as an anomaly, the resolution of which actually entails a restructuring of the learner's constructs.

Not surprisingly some of the more successful metaphors have emerged on the literary scene. Bruner, exploring creativity, in various media even refers to the "metaphoric effectiveness" in surprise in ... "connecting domains of experience" that were previously separate or apart, but ....

> with the form of connectedness that has the discipline of art. It is ..the connecting of diverse experiences by the mediation of symbol and metaphor and image.

This essence of combination and the artist's fitness to judge be s/he painter, novelist, poet or musician fascinates him.

Reverting for a moment to the conflation of light and obscurity within "metaphor as a solar eclipse"[42] links us quite neatly with Frank Kermode

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[41] Petrie, H. G., in Ortony, op. cit.,440-447

when in his book *The Genesis of Secrecy* he discusses the nature of obscurity in narrative. The diacritical nature of words in language is never so strong as it is in literary forms - Kermode's close interrogation of the gospel of St. Mark provides no satisfactory exegesis. "The riddle remains dark, so does the gospel."[43] He goes on to explain:-

> Parable it seems, may proclaim truth as a herald does and at the same time conceal truth like an oracle. This double function, this simultaneous proclamation and concealment, will be a principle theme of what follows, for I shall concern myself with the radiant obscurity of narratives somewhat longer than parables, though still subject to these Hermetic ambivalences...

Not just metaphor but a parable, a narrative as an eclipse!

The metaphor as an eclipse offers a startlingly visual opportunity to see the essential element in so much poetry - that encapsulated opposition or antithesis which acts as a filter for new ideas or offers a different perspective for old ones. When Seamus Heaney wrote of Hopkins' work that it was "consonantal fire struck by idea off language" he caught with poetic and metaphoric force the contrasting nature of both thought and sound in it.[44] It is this vital conflation we must offer to children because so often they, better than most adults, know about the force of illusion and

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[42] Paivio, A., in Ortony, A., Metaphor and Thought.151

[43] Kermode, The Genesis of Secrecy, (1979, p.47)

[44] Heaney, Preoccupations, (1980, p.84)

unreality, know too in the words of my grandfather, that dog daisies bark,

so that they share in the willing suspension of disbelief.

> If we want to think about narratives that mean more and other than they seem to say and mean different things to different people, with a particularly sharp distinction drawn between those who are outside and those who are inside, we can hardly do better than consider two parables.

When first reading this I felt particularly inclined to omit the clause refering to 'insiders' and 'outsiders' because of Kermode's point about parable as similitude. The word parable, 'parabole', is translated as comparison - the placing of one thing beside another - the meaning in classical Greek being variously comparison, illustration or analogy.

The hesitation was important because the narratives I more especially wish to define and consider are not those equated in the Greek Bible to the Hebrew word 'marshal', a riddle or dark saying - they are those which seek to clarify or extend meaning and offer insight on a par with the generative metaphor - to be the radiance around the darkened centre. They are those which may be closest to autobiography and selected fact, albeit arranged in chronological or narrative order - those which children, and adults, may use fully to demonstrate their meaning.

However to return temporarily to the literary narrative. (The rhetorical) mode of writing depends heavily on the reader's ability to naturalise it and to recognize the common world which serves it as a point of reference....[45]

Ambiguity in novels often arises as a result of hesitation between strategies and may not always be as deliberate as it is in *Tristram Shandy*. In *The Lord of the Rings* the text may be taken as fantasy because it is read literally as a description of a metaphorical world. In the works of Kafka and Peake the "fantasy is linked with the production and identification of metaphorical worlds."[46] In *The Glass Bead Game* the sense of uneasiness, the dreamlike quality of unreality arises at least in part from the difficulty of using interpretative strategies of reading propositions as metaphorically true in a literal world or literally true in a metaphorical world. The metaphor at times is so close to reality yet the foothold is never gained - the ground shifts beneath the reader's feet. Or - it might be put another way - that, as with Balzac, whom Culler cites, what is realism at one level is fantasy at another and the difficulty for the reader is acceptance of a whole range of possible interpretations.

Henry James' short stories are particularly apposite examples of the metaphorical features under consideration here. *The Turn of the Screw*

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[45] Culler, Structuralist Poetics, (1975, p.135)

[46] Culler, The Pursuit of Signs, (1981, p.60-61)

vacillating between the need for naturalistic or supernatural explanation is filled with metaphorical ambivalence and in *The Figure in the Carpet* the meaning is always in the interaction between the reader and the text. The secret so central to the tale is the meaning, so the story is a metaphor writ large.

Whatever theory of reading we espouse in relation to text, we are told by Iser that almost every discernible structure in fiction has a verbal and affective side. The response of the reader, is the fulfilment of what is prestructured by the language of the text. This must surely also be so with any kind of figurative language and true too of children's analogies, of their selection of their own 'narratives' as exemplar. If, in literature, fiction and reality are to be linked, it must be in terms of what this linking can communicate, not in oppositional terms because "fiction is a means of telling us something about reality."[47] Agreed but the earlier premise is not quite so happy, to what is wit:- "... important to readers, critics and authors alike is what the literature does and not what it means." Surely, as in a metaphor, what it does is inseparable from what it means. When Iser says,

> ...reader and literary text are partners in a process of communication...our prime concern will no longer be the meaning of that text..... but its effect..."[48]

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[47] Iser, W., op. cit., 53

[48] Op. cit., 54

then, while appreciating that the purpose of his argument is to attack the summarising reductionism of literary criticism, there is no need to make this distinction. Interaction between reader and text is where, as with a metaphor, the meaning and effect are inextricably bound however often we try to distinguish them for analytic purposes.

> What concern me here are the qualities which fictional narrative shares with the inner and outer story telling that plays a major role in our sleeping and waking lives. For we dream in narrative, daydream in narrative, remember, anticipate, hope, despair, believe, doubt, plan, revise, criticise, construct, gossip, learn, hate and love by narrative. In order really to live, we make up stories about ourselves and others, about the personal as well as the social past and future....

said Professor Hardy in support of the belief that narrative is a primary act of mind.[49] It certainly is a way of ordering our experience and presenting censored aspects of the constructs we can bear to live with, to the world. Taking for granted this relationship which often exists between narrative and metaphor, how far can teachers effectively use metaphor to encourage and extend creative thinking and what part does the undoubted visual element play? Anyone who doubts that youngsters of all levels of achievement handle metaphor in such a way need only be referred to an essay set for a West Midlands joint GCE/CSE a few years ago entitled *The Wall* which produced an astonishing variety of interpretations, very few of which were literal.

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[49] Hardy. Tellers and Listeners, (1975)

If the following premises can be agreed :-

1) we use metaphor in daily discourse; 2) that in any language metaphor is part of a fundamental process by which a language evolves and struggles to mean; 3) that all of us, if only at a relatively basic level, live with, understand and use forms of metaphor; 4) that Paivio's notion of dual-coding is the way in which we engage with the visually creative 'bit' of metaphor (i.e. that both imagery and verbal processes are co-operatively but independently involved in language and thought, the former dealing with concrete objects and events, the latter with linguistic information; then 5) this conception of the operation of our comprehension processes may begin to take issue with a major difficulty concerning language and thought offered by a number of prominent philosophers.

Susanne Langer reminds us that languages have a linear form and that this necessitates that ideas be expressed as a string, orally or graphically, no matter how embedded the syntax. "Any idea which does not lend itself to this projection is ineffable, incommunicable by means of words."[50] She goes on to show deep concern about the neo-positive assumptions 1) that language is the only means of articulating thought, and 2) that everything which is not speakable thought is feeling. This leaves semantics trapped in a narrow, totally linguistically-bound field and inevitably

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[50] Langer, S., op. cit., 82

underrates poetry and metaphysics as purely subjective experiences. Only discursive expression can then be admitted as genuine thought .

Once we begin to acknowledge the role visual processes have in relation to perception and, therefore to thought, the door must be opened to the part played by all the 'physical apparatus' through which we perceive our world. From the nature and functioning of our instruments of perception Langer concludes that our sensory appreciation of forms is a non-discursive symbolism the primary function of which is to conceptualise, to abstract from what would otherwise be a 'flux of sensations.'"[51]

The different media of non-verbal representation are frequently referred to as 'languages'. Langer makes it clear that the terminology is too loose, that the discursive nature of language means it has various characteristics which ensure that it differs from wordless symbolism, that is to say, it has permanent units of meaning combinable into larger units, fixed equivalences, making definition and translation possible. It also has general connotations which require non-verbal, deictic action to give its terms specific denotations. Its meanings are successively received and understood as part of the larger discourse. Presentational symbolism however is non-discursive, untranslatable, allows no definitions within its own system and is unable directly to convey generalisations. All other

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[51] Langer, S., op. cit.,93

symbolic elements composing a "larger, articulate symbol can only be understood" through the meaning of the whole, through their relations within the total structure. Their very functioning as symbols depends on the fact that they are involved in a simultaneous, integral presentation.

Summary:

Language and thought have separate roots and even given that metacognition cannot occur without language, that is thinking about thinking cannot occur non-verbally, when a symbol, verbal or visual operates, it cannot do so without meaning, which means it must be conceptualised or understood and is therefore relating to experience whether that is in the realms of reason, intuition or appreciation. This may not be the highest order of thinking but it quite obviously must be part and parcel of our thought processes and hence influential on the ultimately discursive forms.

Metaphor and its role in language seemed a particularly apposite feature to consider at this point for two reasons. First in that it functions by juxtaposing unexpected notions and secondly because of its visual element. The chapter began with Wegener's theory of linguistic development (emendation and metaphor), and compared various theories but then crucially explored Max Black's idea of creative metaphor. The high level abstraction entailed when it works leads to a different way of 'seeing', making it an enormously powerful cognitive tool

both as an aid to understanding and in the development of creative thought. There seemed at one stage to be a possibility that speech acts where they have an illocutionary element might have a relation to metaphor and Donald Davidson tried hard to link the perlocutionary force with it too. However taking Palmer's objections and his defining of performative utterances into account, the argument is circular and fails to get anywhere useful in terms of actually explaining either metaphor or any metaphoric force within speech acts.

The literature thus far centred on the operative force or functioning of the metaphor but the work of psychologists such as Paivio tries to determine why this particular language form arises at all. He proposes a number of interesting concepts. It is, he says, evidence of the way the human mind uses presentational symbols and is a form of abstractive seeing. The inexpressibility hypothesis, which grapples with Langer's plea for the recognition of non-discursive thought is key to this. Metaphor is the means by which we may express experience which cannot be described literally, and, importantly the imagery involved makes it memorable, vivid and also possibly an emotion rousing factor.

While there is nothing simple about our understanding of the role of the imaging component, Paivio's description of dual coding offers insight into how memory may be greatly facilitated by imagery. Osgood on the other hand, also a psychologist, believes the mediating process in metaphor is

not modality-specific. The basis for similarity in both synaesthesia and metaphor is in common affective reactions; that is to say, aroused by different stimuli and it is therefore abstractive seeing which is independent of concrete modal forms. Possibly both approaches may be involved here just as images in reading for example may be 'firmed up' to examine them, but are more normally present as fleeting abstractions.

Many disciplines have taken an interest in this aspect of language and not least philosophy. Langer is one philosopher who has already been mentioned and also Ricoeur whose metaphor of distance with its change of focus can be linked with the earlier discussion of ways of thinking and with analytic and syncretistic thought.

Hugh Petrie an educationist from Illinois, is concerned with metaphor and all its allied forms too, as an epistemological tool allowing learners to make bridges from the known to the unknown and effectively changing constructs - the manner in which of course Bruner's act of creative thought can be achieved.

The widening of the concept of metaphor to include narrative forms has important classroom implications. To bring this into focus, aspects of the writing of Iser, Hardy, Kermode and even Henry James are included. Narrative is clearly so much more than entertainment. Finally the chapter returns to the earlier consideration of discursive and non-discursive

presentational symbolism ending with the importance of non-discursive forms which even if they are at a much lower level of abstraction, can integrate with discursive forms when we think. The case for more considered use of visual concepts in schools is emerging.

CHAPTER FOUR

Knowing and Seeing

Introduction:

With the empirical work in mind this chapter seeks to determine what we 'know' in relation to what we perceive and how we perceive. It is an exploration of what constitutes perception as preparation for a closer look at the effects of a more 'visual' education. Ernst Gombrich's work is central here demonstrating the nature of visual ambiguity and the visual metaphor. The physiological processes involved in seeing are examined through recent theories of direct and indirect perception. Perception is seen in current theory as the interpretation of a flow of information, so what shapes what we abstract? To look at this reference is made to the work of Bruce and Green. This concept of 'flow' must raise the question as to whether, if there is as suggested, no direct transmission of image into the brain, this is why the human mind does not turn all 'read' images into concrete, visual pictures and why, therefore, images do not have to be modality-specific. Seen in this light there may be a firm physiological basis for Osgood's claim regarding the nature of the metaphor's mediating process. (See Chapter 2.)

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The conceptual image is developed through schemata and exemplified claims Ernst Gombrich. No-one doubts the need for such schemata in the reading-writing process but there have been very long periods in the history of Art education when the 'all-your-own-work - no-copying-school' has held sway, to the detriment of children learning to draw and paint.

Allan Paivio concluded from his experiments that "verbal conditions encouraging image arousal also facilitate concept discovery".[1] He wanted, while looking at the functioning of the visual imagination in the comprehension of metaphor, to draw attention to the danger that if this resulted in a focus on the literal aspect of metaphor rather than its metaphorical force, the process of concept discovery could be hindered not advanced. It is very tempting to ask whether the writers of stories or composers of poems give this any thought when their work is published for children, or, if they do, whether the accompanying image or illustration has any more immediate purpose than to sell the novel or anthology. The standard of writing for young people seems to have improved by leaps and bounds with a good deal of this enrichment stemming from more recent literary theory and perhaps a better understanding of the process and nature of reading.

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[1] Paivio, A., Psychological Processes in Comprehension, in Ortony, A.., Metaphor and Thought, 165

However while the draughtsmanship of illustration is in many instances of an unquestionably high standard, even the Maurice Sendak's of this world are still, in the main, providing a visual interpretation rather than an interactive visual metaphor. There are signs that photography is advancing rather further but how consistently in approach it is hard to tell. Some anthologies of poetry have quite beautiful photographic additions which offer scope for a wider interpretation than has hitherto been the case, yet anthologies are themselves a problem. Most contain by their very nature, a selection subjectively chosen by the compiler which does not appeal in its entirety to any one teacher - we all pick and choose. Anthologies are therefore restricting and of limited value. In the long run the cost of illustration must be prohibitive; it is hard to see the future of the visual metaphor encapsulated there.

Nevertheless the still photograph deliberately exploiting ambiguity is as much a subject for exploration as the sequential film or video narrative. One may speculate about such notions as an 'ideal reader' (Iser), or consider the 'beholder's' share (Gombrich) but while the latter warns us in his role as art historian/psychologist that the 'frozen' image, especially where it relates to human expression cannot give reality of movement, its orchestration, or its melody, if enough space is left for the beholder this can encourage a successful sharing of ideas, which is, when all is said and done, another kind of movement.

Linguists who criticised Chomsky were careful to stress his lack of emphasis on learning to mean. Gombrich, clearly well versed in much of what modern linguistics has to say, throws in his lot for art in this respect.....

> in any case it is unlikely that we shall make much progress in understanding how images work unless we start from the assumption that our senses were given to us to apprehend meaning rather than shapes. Apparently our mind is so avid for meaning that it will go on searching and integrating as if it were hungering for it all the time ready to devour anything that can satisfy this need once it is roused.[2]

It is the nature of how we see, as well as what we see, which needs to be better understood. Ernst Gombrich grappled with aspects of this in his seminal work *Art and Illusion*. In trying to make the distinction between 'knowing' and seeing he felt that the artist had something to teach the rest of us in respect of a willingness to shun the ready - made and take intellectual risks.

He spoke first about the conquest of illusion, the struggle for mimesis in Art. That is quite simply, imitation through a knowledge of perspective and light and shade - thus the 'seeing'. In more primitive art forms it is possible to find examples of the 'knowing' which to some extent precludes the 'seeing'. A bird must have two eyes, a pair of wings and a pair of feet. The 'knowing' demands illustration of what we can touch and see of the object in its entirety - only when we have learned the art and tricks of perspective is it possible to represent what at times we actually see. As another example

Gombrich cites Riegl's argument concerning Egyptian art where vision plays only a very limited part in the effort to render objects as they appear to the sense of touch.[3] Hence recession and fore-shortening which represent the shifting viewpoint - the perspective - are shunned in favour of recording an object's more permanent shape.

Then again the artist represents what he can; that is to say what his skill and training enable him to do, so that whatever he represents naturalistically is therefore to some extent dependent on his ability. That in its turn is shaped by the ways and means his culture offers him. The 'naturalism' of the past is therefore selective as Gombrich suggests....

> The artist, no less than the writer, needs a vocabulary before he can embark on a 'copy' of reality.

The whole concept of Ruskin's 'innocent eye' is a myth because from earliest childhood on we are building this vocabulary and amassing schema by which we see so that it really is extremely difficult "to disentangle what we really see from what we merely 'know'..." [4] For all that the attempt to make the distinction is long-standing, as witness Pliny on the subject:- "...the mind is the real instrument of sight and observation, the eyes act as a sort of vessel receiving and transmitting the visible portion

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[2] Gombrich, E.H., Art and Illusion,

[3] Gombrich, E.H., Ibid., 15

[4] Ibid., 12, 250-251

of the consciousness."[5] It simply is not possible to engage in the process of seeing visual sense data. A sphere for example has its shape and solidity from the properties of space and form because of a sense of touch since it must appear to the naked eye as a flat disc. It can only be on the rare occasions when we see an object completely out of context that it is possible to achieve 'the innocent eye' and at such moments the mind works over-time searching desperately to draw on some kind of schema to make what is visible meaningful.

Gombrich is unhappy though with the often proposed notion that mankind has progressed from a primitive art, with primitive child-like schema, to sophisticated, naturalistic landscape painting because of a natural movement from touch to vision, since according to Warburg's investigations even the naturalistic quattrocento artists have borrowed earlier formulae and dependence on tradition and convention is "the rule even with the works of the Renaissance and the Baroque."[6] Gombrich tells us that the search for the illusion of reality depends so much on what is reality and if that notion shifts so does what is seen.

In the history of art there is inevitably a search for influences but this makes no less a mystery of creativity; the pull of the current paradigm is strong yet

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[5] Gombrich, E.H., loc. cit.

[6] Gombrich, op. cit., pp.19,20

there are always "exceptional beings to break this spell" and from whom come the advances on which others may build. This operates, as Thomas Kuhn reminds us, in all fields of discovery.[7] The bricks by which illusions of art are created and by which we approach reality (the search for naturalism or mimesis) are actually "indispensable tools for the artist's analysis of appearances."

Constable saw his painting as little short of genuine scientific experiment and he, an artist whose records of cloud formation never cease to amaze with their breathtaking naturalism. I have never forgotten the first time I saw them. Photographs too, are experiments with exposure and depth of field. There is nothing automatic about selection of angle, size, or exposure in the hands of a good photographer and even when the image is recorded there are tremendous opportunities for a creative originality in the printing afterwards. A print is not a mere transcript from a negative and neither photographer nor painter transcribe exactly what they see whatever the intention, they can only translate it into the terms of their own medium. For future reference it is important to remember the aspect of light which can wreak havoc with likeness when it changes and how the artist or photographer must learn to cope with this in terms of relationships.

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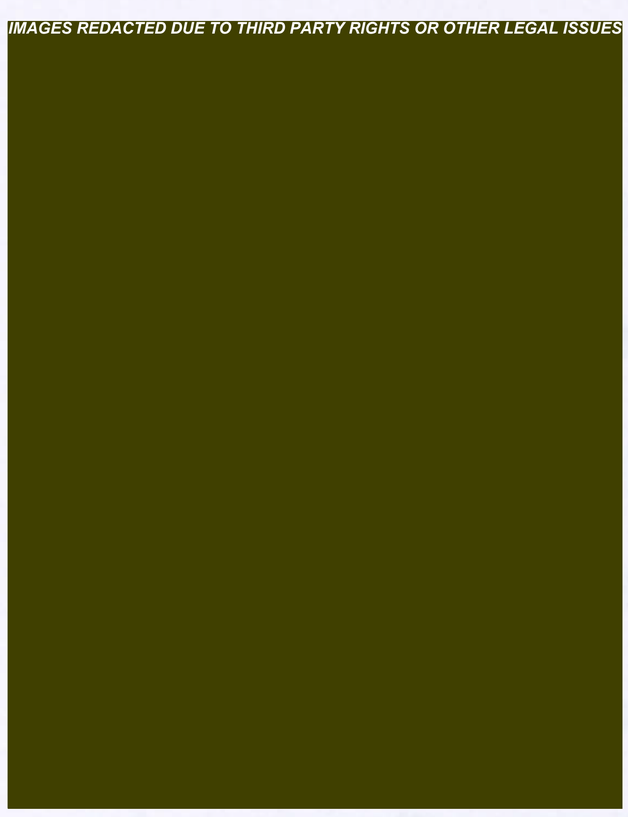
[7] Kuhn, T., The Theory of Scientific Revolutions

Gombrich gathers further evidence to support the psychological theories of progressive differentiation previously mentioned. He cites J.J. Gibson writing about visual states:-

> The progress of learning is from indefinite to definite not from sensation to perception. We do not learn to have percepts but to differentiate them.



And in theoretical biology L. Van Bertalanffy places the emphasis not on the stimulus but on the organism's response - initially vague and general, but gradually more articulated and differentiated. "Modern research makes it probable that at first there are yet unorganized and amorphous wholes which progressively differentiate."[8] Psychologists remind us again and again that what we see is continually mediated by what we expect to see and what is our experience through observation from the past. A 'mental set' since this is what it is, will determine the acceptance of what is judged satisfactory mimesis.

Experiment has shown the danger of confusing the way a figure is drawn with the way it is seen. Again this is not a clear-cut matter of skill in draughtsmanship. In F.C. Bartlett's now famous investigations, his students were asked to reproduce a "nonsense" figure from memory (see p.101). The way in which they recorded the strange shape was clearly affected

by the closeness of the schema used by each of them to try to 'fix' the original image. Those who labelled it 'anchor' drew too big a ring, and when it was labelled 'pick axe' the prongs became affected. Only the student who construed it as a prehistoric battle axe gave an accurate representation.[9]

If we as observers lack a proper pre-existing category, then distortion can set in and what we 'see' lacks visual reality. What we see has little or no correlation with a photograph, we are not seeing reality as the camera does, though what the camera 'sees' is not more real. In the search for reality a work of art comes very close to Zola's definition- "a corner of nature seen through a temperament"[10] and this too mediated by the possibilities of the medium in the sense of brush versus pencil or line opposed to colour and mass. The materials impose restrictions in terms of what one looks for and how a picture may be executed.

That both child art and primitive art seem to use a language of symbols rather than a supposedly more sophisticated 'naturalistic' image may give rise to the postulation that this was an art based not so much on an act of seeing but on knowing - it operated with conceptual images. More recent thinking has moved away from this since if we accept that all art is

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[8] Gombrich, E.H., op. cit. 23

[9] Gombrich, E.H., ibid., 64

conceptual, we all, children, primitives, sophisticated technicians alike, need initial categories or some kind of imaginal language in which to describe the visible world. There is a reliance upon concepts and mental constructs to enable us to see and move nearer to 'the actual' demands of modification of our initial schema. 'Seeing' is conditioned by habits and expectation, therefore to see 'accurately' visual observation must overcome the held schema but paradoxically the sophisticated adult by virtue of age and hence time available, has more schema on which to draw to 'see' and represent. 'Seeing' is in this sense learning and the psychological process is one and the same because the sight we speak of is insight. This operation or happening is effectively that described by Eleanor J. Gibson in her investigations into learning - perceptual learning. According to the theories of J.J. Gibson, perception involves a hunt for invariants - a hunt which is a process in time.[11] We respond to a match or mismatch between anticipation and information so that many of the visual sensations we have are not caused by overt stimuli but originate within the nervous system - that is to say psychologically. Normally these "anticipatory phantoms" and the incoming information fuse readily and efficiently so that we are unaware of either as distinct entities but if we inhibit the process then we can see pre-images as distinct from after

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[10] Gombrich, E.H., ibid., 55

[11] Gibson, E.J., Principles of Perceptual Learning and Development,1969, 77

images (that is those processes which are generally attributable to purely physiological processes).[12]

Because of the many factors which affect what we see there is little possibility of telling at any moment which visual experience is due to the optical world and which to memories or guesses. Why else when we visit the optician does he have to test us with random letters? A strong glare - to give one example - plays on the nervous system and arouses an after-image while experiments with the human visual system demonstrate that it is possible to "...predict or trigger certain non-veridical visual experiences through the arousal of visual sensations."[13]

It is, through all this, crucial to remember that when we 'see' anything we do not just receive one static image but rather a series - a whole flow of information and the central nervous system effects the task of separating what we 'know' to be the invariant shape of a rigid object from the transfigurations of its momentary aspects.[14] Our vision is not like that of the camera producing a photo with a fixed correlation of the physical and optical world recorded on a light-sensitive plate.[15] Though we react extremely rapidly to movement in the peripheral area of vision long before

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[12] Gombrich, E.H., The Image and the Eye, (1982, p.170)

[13] Gombrich, E.H., op. cit., 180

[14] Ibid., 252

we have any idea what has moved, we know that the relation of eye movement and interest are so automatic that we find it very difficult to separate them. It is even harder to separate what we remember, anticipate or actually do see when the object in front of us is familiar but indistinct for any reason.

This complexity is further compounded when a reader who, with legitimate anticipation of theme, character development or narrative, contends also with 'seeing' print. Whole theories of reading have been developed with a knowledge of the way in which because of anticipation and the part played by expectation, minimal cues are used progressively to differentiate words and meaning. The realisation that we receive a constant flow of information means that it is helpful to be aware of at least an outline of developments in current perception theories. Predominantly there are three major traditions relating to how and what we perceive.[16]

The first is purely physiological, talking in terms of patterns of light, receptor cells and electrical activity. The second or traditional one asks rather more, that is, what processes operate on the retinal image to offer perceptual

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[15] Ibid., 178 and fol.

[16] Bruce, V., and Green, P., Visual Perception - Physiology, Psychology and Ecology, (1985) Pt. 1, Chap. 1

experience? The last theory is an 'ecological' approach and treats the input for vision as an optic array rather than as an image.

The last two are the more recent (in some senses contrasting) theories of vision. The main areas of contention relate to the nature of visual input and whether perception is direct or indirect. Bruce and Green point out that for many practical purposes whether the input is an optic array or an image does not matter but there are some instances where to have the concept of an array or pattern flow is actually enlightening. It certainly helped scientists making studies of comparative vision. It must not be forgotten that perceiving is much more than mere 'seeing'; it is also knowing, and science as a discipline is no stranger to metaphor and the way that trope can enable concepts to be seen afresh.

To offer an example: in the light of the concept of an optic array it can be more easily understood that image-forming eyes are not the only light sensitive structures which can achieve a degree of directional sensitivity. Unlike plants, which during the process of photosynthesis, absorb electro-magnetic radiation present in the visible spectrum into the chlorophyll molecules and thus effect the biochemical synthesis of sugars, animals have concentrated on absorbing light in light-sensitive molecules harnessing it to mechanisms which make them move. Presumably a variation and development of what happens when plants react phototropically. However to return to light-sensitive animals.... Simple

protozoan structures, single celled animals, have pigment molecules whose chemical structure changes when light is absorbed. The change in all cell membrane permeability to ions that this brings about leads to an alteration in the cell's electrical information potential. In larger, many-celled animals the greater distance for transmission of electrical information necessitates the development of motor neurons with long axons and the evolution of complex nervous systems. In invertebrates the motor and interneurons responsible for muscle contraction contain pigment and are directly light-sensitive. This is how various of the molluscs, echinoids and crustaceans are sensitive to light (i.e. have a diffuse dermal light sense) but do not actually possess photo-receptor cells.[17]

Most animals however, which are sensitive to light possess photo-receptor cells either scattered over the surface or concentrated into eyespots but they cannot with such limited optical equipment adequately detect spatial patterns in light because single receptors or simple bunches in eyespots sample "the total light coming to them from all directions though they can detect a change, over a period of time, in intensity."

To detect spatial pattern in the optic array, that is to have directional sensitivity, requires a number of photo-receptors each sensitive to light in a

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[17] Ibid., Chaps. 1 &14

narrow segment of the array. Even the way the pigment is arranged in a cell can aid this making an individual cell more sensitive to light from some directions than others. The emergence of eye-cups in such creatures as the limpet or snail offers a greater degree of directional sensitivity but to go any further...

> requires the possession of a true eye... A true eye forms an image on a layer of photo-receptor cells. When an image is formed all light rays reaching the eye from one point in space are brought together at one point in the image, so that each receptor cell in the eye is struck by light coming from a different narrow segment in the optic array.[18]

The conception 'optic array' not 'image' reveals how limiting the analogy between camera and eye is: the purpose of a camera is to produce a picture to be viewed by people; [and the quality of image from the cheapest instamatic is vastly superior to that from even the most sophisticated eye] but the purpose of the eye and brain is to extract the information from the changing optic array needed to guide an animal's or a person's actions, or to specify objects or events of importance. Although this could be achieved by first converting the retinal image into a neural 'image' of photograph-like quality and then extracting information from

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[18] Ibid., 13

this second image, such a process seems implausible on the grounds of economy; it would be wasteful...

> the extraction of information about pattern begins in the retina itself, and the optic nerve does not transmit a stream of pictures to the brain, as a television camera does to a television set, but instead it transmits *information* about the pattern of light reaching the eyes.[19]

The idea of a pattern of information of a structure as visual input then makes possible the asking of questions about the nature of relationships between the environment of the perceiver and the structure of the optic array. If the indirect theorists' traditional view, rather than the ecological one obtains, there is no room for such questions since the input consists only of elements of point intensity, and light intensity, on a single receptor, gives no environmental information.

Both Direct and Indirect theorists agree on some basic points. First there is sensory contact with the real world and that world is revealed to us by perception. Secondly visual perception is mediated by light reflected from surfaces and objects in the world and that some sort of physiological system is needed to perceive light. Lastly both camps agree that perceptual experience can be influenced by learning.

The indirect tradition has it that there is a flat retinal image plus a process of inference which necessitates knowledge of the world (for example

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[19] Ibid., 32 and fol.

knowledge of the size of objects to determine distance). Direct theorist J.J. Gibson believes no mediation is necessary because the optic flow and the optic array will directly specify surface layout (and offer a much richer input of information) through the invariant properties of the array which specify structure and events in the environment and it is thus possible to detect them directly.

The indirect theory of perception does of course allow that there is one area of direct detection - that of light intensity by the photoreceptor cells. By contrast Gibson and like minded scientists believe that the perception of all properties is just like the perception of light intensity. However the Direct Theory of Perception needs to be explained on two levels. First the ecological one which is concerned with the information needed from the environment to operate and how a changing optic array provides that information, and secondly the physiological level, which means how networks of nerve cells are organized to detect these invariants. The link between the two levels is legitimately and necessarily seen as "representations" but with the representations as patterns of activity in networks of neurons.

In fact J.J. Gibson largely ignores the physiological level and Bruce and Green feel that it is necessary to go further than he does and follow Marr and Ullman's positings of an algorithmic explanation of how, given an

input of a fluctuating pattern of light intensities, an animal's neural interactions could result in a particular output for direct perception.

However as with so many theoretical standpoints there are strong and weak forms. Bruce and Green offer us a weak form of Gibson's theory which they find more readily acceptable particularly in terms of how far mediating or inferential processes have a role in perception.[20] Gibson believes there was sufficient information from the structure of light directly specifying surface layout to claim that the invariant properties of the optic array are detected directly; there is no need therefore for a mediating process in the perception of distance - cognition has very little part to play at all. However inclined one might be to doubt this extreme view he held, and surely there are times when learning seems undeniably to have affected perception, his concept of an optic array was what lead to a very different perception of what information is actually available in the light to the perceiver. There appears to be no direct transmission of an image into the brain because the visual pathways scientists have been able to measure do not simply copy the retinal pattern of light into a pattern of neural activity and single cells appear to respond to particular kinds of change of light intensity over both time and space. The process of extracting information about the pattern actually seems to begin at the

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[20] Bruce, V. and Green, P., op. cit., 321 and fol.

retina; the optic nerve isn't like a television cable sending pictures, instead it transmits information concerning that pattern reaching the eyes.

Both Marr and Ullman are convinced of the necessity to use an algorithmic theory to explain the organisation of the fluctuating patterns of light intensities and compute the variables of optic flow. The current metaphor of the brain as a computer may fall by the wayside like many similar explanatory images but it has not yet out-lived its usefulness.[21] What after all is the detection and use of minimal cues but a process of selecting the functionally useful invariant patterns?)

Of Gibson Marr says:

> Although one can criticize certain shortcomings in the quality of Gibson's analysis, its major, and in my view, fatal shortcoming lies at a deeper level and results from a failure to realize two things. First the detection of physical invariants, like image surfaces, is exactly and precisely an information processing problem in modern terminology. And second, he vastly underrated the sheer difficulty of such detection." [22]

No matter what the truth in relation to the act of perceiving when the process advances and becomes one of learning, memory and mediation

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[21] Cf. The Horizon programme - *The Man Who Made Up His Mind - Darwin & the Evolutionary Process.* Concerns the brain and selectivity - the latest metaphor, and possibly the most useful if, despite current debunking, the Smith theories of reading still hold water. (See Lingard, T., UKRA, 1977

[22] Gibson, E. J., in Flavell, J H., op.cit., 134

seem crucial factors in the subsequent learning operation, and it is Eleanor Gibson to whom one may turn to address two basic questions which help to shed more light here.

> First, what is it that gets acquired whenever perceptual learning or development takes place?...Second, what processes or mechanisms are responsible for this change?

asks Flavell. [23] In describing the process Gibson tells us that as a result of the change learning brings about, the organism has an increased ability to obtain information from its environment and that this is a result of increased discrimination from the stimuli.

> The criterion of perceptual learning is thus an increase in specificity. What is learned can be described as detection of properties, patterns and distinctive features.

Where Gibson's theory really scores is in its insistence on abstraction and filtering and this begins to make clearer the role of cognition in more advanced learning. At any given time it is impossible to 'perceive' even a fraction of what is there to be perceived in our immediate environment. Multi-level selectivity is an adaptational necessity. No organism could possibly perceive and attend equally and simultaneously to everything in its surroundings.

Pursuing this line, particularly with respect to Gombrich's unease about concepts of a straight evolution from symbolism to mimetic reality, then

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[23] Gibson, E.J., in Flavell, J.H., Cognitive Development, 153

despite what has been said earlier, the development of Greek art from the 6th century B. C. through to the 4th century does demonstrate a pretty clear progression from the stiffer or more rigid "symmetrical frontal figure conceived from one aspect only" [24] towards the conquest of naturalism through an accumulated progression of 'corrections' brought about by closely observing reality. Prior to the illusionist achievements of Greek art the conceptual image had dominated (the animal had four legs and two eyes) - and the schematic, conceptual image was firmly in the referential plane. To achieve mimesis involved the conquest of two-dimensional space to produce a convincing image and the manipulation of schema which were sufficiently fluid to be modified progressively thus creating a fully representational image with all the skills of perspective employed.[25]

Seeing the development of art in this light gives renewed validity to the practice of copying. Art is conceptual so the artist practises to learn how to draw an object before attempting a moving subject from life. From about 1538 onwards printed books of patterns of schema were compiled to help. The artist recognized that there is no art without traditional schema just as advances in science could not happen without constant reference to accumulated knowledge from past experiment. John Constable, to use him as an example once more, made careful copies of schemata of

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[24] Gombrich, E.H., Art and Illusion,100

[25] Ibid., 119

clouds in a drawing book by Alexander Cozens - not training his eye or learning to see, but giving himself the tools through which he could learn to discriminate.

One of the most interesting and important aspects of Gombrich's work is his expectation of what he calls "...the beholder's share." What we read into shapes, images or pictures is heavily dependent "on our capacity to recognize in them things or images we find stored in our minds." There is a process of complex interaction in the same way that the writer of skill guides but leaves space for the reader's interpretation - space therefore for subjectivity of approach. Interesting that Impressionism claimed to be the "triumph of objective truth"![26]

It is necessary to pursue this idea of the lack of detail further, to remember the wild guessing provoked by Bruner in some of his experiments and to think quite carefully about the visual effects he presented. The 'sfumato' which reduces specific information for the viewer actually stimulates projection and seems to be operating psychologically in a remarkably similar manner to the uncertainty stimulated by unexpected juxtapositions of verbal imagery in a metaphor. "It is the power of expectation rather

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[26] Ibid., 169

than the power of conceptual knowledge that moulds what we see in life no less than in art." [27]

Metaphor plays with this expectation as does Impressionist painting. We look for intention on the artist's part to supply the background or context as we would look for intention in speech or conversation to give us relevance, drawing on our own gathered schemata and cultural understanding to do so. In great art, as in great literature, there is the pervasive and worrying problem of elitism if for no other reason than that it excludes. Art and literature are, after all, ultimately dependent on their ability to communicate. Gombrich demonstrates the problem through the role of the sketch in Constable's work - "the seemingly careless brush strokes" - which constitute both the artist's grasp of what is essential and his reliance on a small section of a public which knew how to 'read' his work.

Metaphors of substitution or of interaction rely on some measure of initial ambiguity. When we perceive - the verb itself potentially ambiguous - what we perceive is not necessarily what others perceive, even allowing for genetic or physical variation in our visual equipment, since what we know also influences what we see. It is important therefore to explore the effects of ambiguity on thinking, talking and writing and any subsequently increased or improved creativity and it is important to consider the

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[27] Ibid., 188

projection of the same objects onto the same outline. It seems to be the case that we can oscillate between the same 'readings' switching quite rapidly from one to another but we are not able to hold two conflicting interpretations simultaneously. Gombrich instances Steinberg's drawing of a hand drawing a hand, pointing out that the 'language of art' can offer us a subject which could either be real or a complete invention. He makes a comparison with the philosophical paradox such as the blackboard with only one statement on it. To wit..."The only statement on this blackboard is untrue."...that is, if it is true it is untrue and if it is untrue, true."[28] There needs to be a differentiation of language from metalanguage to convey certain information in words - if only through quotation marks.

When we read images, particularly those which only suggest to allow interaction, it is hard to distinguish what is actually given as distinct from what we project. Reading print, using minimal cues, or the diacritical features of words, is a similar process:

> Criterial sets of features within functionally equivalent feature lists permit the identification of words on minimal information ....[29]

Yet this very method by which we read letters or words as meaning, by which we 'read' both print and drawings or paintings for meaning is what allows the writer or artist to exploit ambiguity.

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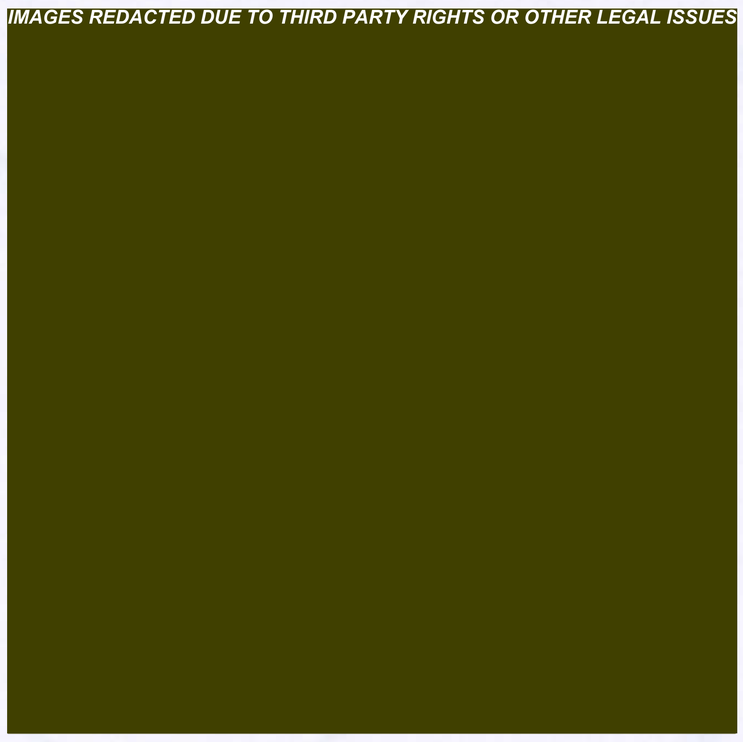
[28] Ibid., 201

[29] Smith, Understanding Reading, (1928, p.131)



A

"Perception... has a subject-predicate character. To see, is to see 'something out there'." [30] That is to say we need to project an object onto a context even if it is only space.

With art, particularly as it has begun to free itself from an illusion of a base in a 'real' world ...

> the question how to suggest one reading rather than another of any arrangement of forms has become of crucial importance. [31]

Gombrich is very concerned with how often we actually fail to see ambiguity. Light and shade of course add their own equivocacy but here again we may not appreciate this because of assumptions we immediately and almost inevitably make about the direction of light when we are not cognisant of its source.

To prove his point Gombrich isolated the conch (A) from Crivelli's picture, *Madonna and Child enthroned with Donor* c.1470 and turned it upside down (see Chap.V111: *Ambiguity of the Third Dimension*).

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[30] Ibid., 219

[31] Ibid., 223

Psychologists, he tells us, have discovered that when there are no other clues Western observers usually fasten onto the likelihood that the light is falling from high up and on the left hand side. This isn't just chance apparently because this is the position which is most convenient for drawing or writing with the right hand and consequently is what we learn to expect from most paintings.

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B

Again and again in *Art and Illusion* Gombrich details the difficulty of seeing visual ambiguity, yet throughout Chapter V111, and earlier, with reference to the duck-rabbit (from Die Miegendau Blatter), gives us a range of examples (to which could be added many more in current circulation) where the ambiguity is so obvious it is disturbing. Given an outline drawing of a hand we do, I think, have to make a conscious and determined switch to the alternative projection. However offered Thiery's figure (B), "the quintessence of cubism," like the mosaic patterns from the floors in Antioch and Rome, we find it asks for a spatial reading yet resists all the efforts we make in order to complete it.[32]

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[32] Gombrich, E.H., op. cit., 241

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C

If in art as in speech or writing the role of the beholder or listener is to participate in a constant search for meaning then the fact that there is no simple and direct equation with communication is both its greatest strength and its greatest potential weakness. Simple shapes which in outline could represent one of two view points are often cited as examples of ambiguity. (See e.g. C)

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D

More complex images like Escher's *Relativity* take one much closer visually to the literary world of Gormanghast (see e.g. D). Example E though, is one where personally I have to concentrate very hard to see the alternative reading- an old woman - if any time has elapsed between viewings.

If Thiery's figure embodies the essential nature of cubism, mimesis may have been rejected but deliberate ambiguity abounded, and an ambiguity it was impossible to miss. Cubism with all its initial strangeness was a revolt against the creation of illusion of a particular sort. It attempted to force one reading because it was and is a mere canvas, a man-made construction refusing to employ the sophistical ambiguity of painted verisimilitude.

Visual representations used in the classroom to stimulate writing and talk, or as a deliberate foil or aid to children's thinking about verbal messages demand awareness of the possibilities on both referential and metaphorical levels and the only way of gaining that awareness is by exploring those possibilities with the pupils, otherwise what ought to be a liberating and enhancing approach to creativity could actually prove more stultifying and restrictive than not bothering with the visual aspect at all. In due course children will be asked to explore cartoon narrative as part of the empirical data gathered to offer evidence of their conceptual development and ability to handle visual symbolism.

Since this exploration of the metaphor in both its verbal and visual forms began with a conception of it as cognitive object which could be a tool, an aid to thought, and recollecting that much of the visual material which appeals for whatever reason, is the comic strip, it is worth bearing in mind that the discussion of caricature must also have its place. With the development of new graphic techniques in the 19th century, erstwhile landscape painters like the Swiss Topffer began to develop the genre to tell stories.

Caricature - the picture story - the comic strip, began as it has largely remained - as the poor relation for the enjoyment of those who 'look' rather than read since it is a form which Topffer said ...

> appeals particularly to children and the masses, the sections of the public which are particularly easily perverted and which it would be particularly desirable to raise."[33]

He believed this to be true because such line drawing is purely conventional symbolism, a pictorial language needing little or no

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[33] Ibid., 286

reference to nature. For this reason it will be immediately accessible to children for whom disentangling naturalistic painting might prove difficult.

However, whatever else he may have missed Topffer knew that the elliptical style of such artists induced the beholder to supply what was omitted. The brevity of the cartoon, because of its politically and socially ephemeral natural, leaves scope for a whole host of rarely explored and conflicting resources.

Summary:

This chapter has called heavily on the work of Ernst Gombrich exploring the relation between what we know and what we see, an especially important concern when looking at children's art.

Gombrich's constructivist theory shows the struggle for mimesis demanded by fully representational painting. He is concerned with the development of art through the conquest of 'two dimensional space' by the achieving of perspective skills. His thesis is that the gradual compilation of data and schema enables us to see and discriminate objects in context and that picture making would not be possible without such schemata and a variety of pictorial devices. We are reminded that we do not see static images but rather a flow of information from which we abstract using minimal cues and powers of anticipation.

It was important at this point to outline a little more about the visual processes and, because of the concept of informational flow, to consider current perception theories. Thus the three main strands have been covered and, since it has been shown that there is no direct transmission of images to the brain, then algorithmic theories would seem to have more to offer.

Such questioning of the nature of perception must raise the issue of how children perceive and whether or not it matters which way we present and use visual material for them. Such a vast problem however is not within the compass of this thesis though some aspects of it are clearly of great interest to it.

Parallels are drawn between the working of metaphor, perhaps particularly the creative metaphor (cf. "Metaphor is an eclipse."), and Impressionism noting the way in which both play with expectation. Gombrich's "beholder's share" is concerned with the role of the beholder and the constant search for meaning, a common factor for both verbal and visual imagery. From here we move towards the idea of a 'visual metaphor' and Topffer's handling of caricature and cartoon. It becomes obvious that cartoon too leaves interpretative space.

CHAPTER FIVE

Perception and the Functioning of the Mental Image

Introduction:

> Metaphor is our most striking evidence of abstractive seeing, of the power of the human mind to use presentational symbols. Every new experience, or new idea about things, evokes first of all some metaphorical expression. As the idea becomes familiar this expression 'fades' to a new literal use of the once metaphorical predicate, a more general use than it had before... The use of metaphor can hardly be called a conscious device. It is the power whereby language, even with a small vocabulary manages to embrace a multi-million things, whereby new words are born and merely analogical meanings become stereo-typed into literal definitions..... [Metaphor] is the force that makes [language] essentially relational, intellectual, forever showing up new, abstractive forms in reality, forever laying down a deposit of old abstracted concepts in an increasing treasure of general words.[1]

Langer believes it is the demands of our technological society which call for a more transparent utilitarian text. Thought grows and develops through metaphor. When we listen to words, hear music, appreciate a picture even, then the images flow but however emotive, they are often mediated by a verbal element. Metaphorical language is more to do with

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[1] Langer, S., Philosophy in a New Key, (1975, p.141)

actual relationships than analogous objects to which names or descriptions have been transferred and many metaphors offer therefore analogous relationships and these allow us abstract, imageless thought. We may look for the benefits of synaesthesia in experiments to release feeling but we must be aware that one crucial feature of our senses is that they cannot be translated into one another, we can only find similarity of experience. The actual function of the metaphor however is to turn the mind back to the sensory world- "to illuminate the mind's non-sensory experience for which there are no words in any language."

If language is a series of abstracted symbols so is art but .... "visual forms are not discursive."[2] Briefly Langer is saying that all the constituents of a visual form are presented, no matter how complex their combination, in one single act of vision - not in succession like words but virtually simultaneously. Since it is non-discursive its main purpose is that of allowing us to conceptualise what would otherwise be just a "flux of sensations". What pictures give us simply cannot be translated directly into words.

Likewise.....

> The understanding of space which we owe to sight and touch could never be developed in all its detail and definiteness by a discursive knowledge of geometry. For all that it must not be forgotten that the power of words lies in their ability to grasp and

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[2] Ibid., 93

> hold generality since... in our understanding no image could ever be adequate to the concept of dog in general. [3]

Yet for the Chinese each sign actually makes visible what for us would be an abstract concept. Thinking in images does not, nor could it ever, lead to discursive thought but one image can trigger off a whole train of associated visual images and poetry read aloud can conjure visions which unquestionably belong to the audible signs it consists in.

Arendt goes on to say:-

> These differences between concrete thinking in images and our abstract dealing with verbal concepts are fascinating and disquieting - I have no competence to deal with them adequately. They are perhaps all the more disquieting because amid them we can clearly perceive one assumption we share with the Chinese: the unquestioned priority of vision for mental activities. ...
>
> Representational primitive art, as we have seen, showed what people 'knew' rather than what they 'saw'. For us this priority of vision referred to subsists in the fact that formal philosophy defines thinking as 'seeing' so vision has "tended to serve as the model of perception in general and this as the measure of the other senses." We can be trapped by this metaphor too because the visual predominance is deeply embedded in the Greek language and has been inherited by English in much of its conceptual language.

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[3] Arendt, H., The Life of the Mind, Vol. 1, 100 and fol.

The emergence of 'metaphoric' thinking is of great importance and F.C. Bartlett's work points to links with imaging and symbolising generally. Referring to the actual act of imaging he said .... "[it is] the biological use of the image to facilitate operation of the past in relation to the somewhat changed conditions of the present."[4] Since conditions are always changing, ipso facto, the image is biologically useful.

> In one important respect, words and sensorial images are alike: both act as signs indicating something else which need not be perceptually present at the moment. Thus they are both instruments of the general function of dealing with situations or objects at a distance.

However since words are socially agreed convention and not individual or idiosyncratic choice they do not have to be explained and they can ...

> indicate the qualitative and relational features of a situation in their general aspect just as directly as, and perhaps even more satisfactorily than they can describe its peculiar individuality.[5]

Perhaps the latter is the job of the television image, the simulacrum, the parasitic, iconic image, the 'moving' photograph?

Bartlett believes that the biological individual through imaging has a built in facility through which to learn to distance itself - to facilitate abstraction. Thinking using language as a tool (subsequent to the imaging process)

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[4] Bartlett, F.C., Remembering, 9

[5] Ibid., 225

adding to but not superseding it allows the "conquering (of) the sequential tyranny of past reactions."

> The image method remains the method of brilliant discovery, whereby realms organised by interests usually kept apart are brought together; the thought-word method remains the way of rationalisation and inference, whereby this connecting of the hitherto unconnected is made clear and possible for all, and the results which follow are not merely exhibited, but demonstrated.[6]

If we take symbols (as distinct from just fleeting images) they, together with agreed symbol systems, mediate between individuals as 'biological entities' and the society and its culture. Symbolizing allows understanding and transformation - amodal (or cross-modal) intelligences, with some individuals able to make those links more easily than others. Cartoon work can be a halfway house or transition between symbol and representational figure, varying greatly in degree according to its proximity to representation or abstracted caricature. Of the many connotations of such pictures humour is a central ingredient. Humour, which for Howard Gardner, like metaphor and proverb, transcends the literal but whose essence is shift of emphasis or discovery of incongruity rather than a union of usually remote domains, and which though it 'works' similarly to metaphor, is perhaps more deeply rooted in the immediate social context and therefore more ephemeral in nature.

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[6] Bartlett, F.C., Remembering,226

With a strongly established link between metaphor and thought, the work of Gardner and his colleagues suggesting that primary age children move away from metaphoric usage towards a phase where the driving force is accurate referential description, must itself give pause for thought. In this section those findings regarding the development of metaphor in children's thinking, during what Gardner calls the literal phase, raise a lot of questions. On the assumption that this discovery is generally acknowledged and taking into account that children are able from quite an early age to make synaesthetic connections "drawing on more than one perceptual modality", what happens to young people's concept development if picture narrative is brought into the equation?

In the 1970's Howard Gardner and his colleagues suggested that the development of metaphor as figurative language follows a similar developmental pattern to that which we see in the thesis of concrete-abstract progression. That is to say that general concepts are difficult to appreciate at an early age. Word meanings in very young children are not so firmly and socially fixed as they would be in adults, so that a competent metaphoric use may well indicate heightened awareness and capacity. However the concomitant 'blue-pencilling' ability may be lacking. Certainly Gardner believes that, by the time they reach school,

children are able to make "synaesthetic connections" and draw on more than one perceptual modality.[7]

All the evidence available in the West, Gardner maintains, indicates that the acquiring of an increased vocabulary accompanies a move into a much more literal phase. Nonetheless ten to eleven year olds can generally offer simple, effective paraphrases of metaphor, appreciate and effect connections across sensory domains or between psychological and physical realms and that, whereas all these aspects can be increased by deliberate ploys such as the use of models and/or discussion, the real upturn for metaphor comes at adolescence.

Proverbs, superficially so like metaphor, tend to offer greater difficulty. The reason suggested is that they can be more abstract in nature and when given alternative interpretations, nine year olds again show a preference for the more concrete or literal paraphrase. In the instance cited below, of the two alternative answers (b), with its wider and more abstract application, was ignored in favour of the more direct translation in (a):-

> The smallest insect may cause death by its bite.
> a) The bite of the smallest insect can turn out to be deadly.
> b) The smallest detail can turn out to be important.[8]

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[7] Gardner, H., Children's Language, 19 and fol.?

[8] Ibid., 228

(If however we bear in mind the work of Margaret Donaldson it might seem necessary to introduce a note of caution here. How, for example, were the children asked to select their paraphrase? It would surely be quite difficult to promote the notion of universal applicability of the selected phrase and children might quite naturally go for the nearest approximation to the original.)

In an article published in 1974 the researchers had said that "metaphoric thinking involved rejection of the familiar in favour of the unusual."[9] For older children that shift towards figurative language becomes possible because of increased familiarity with language patterns that younger ones were still in the process of learning.

They said then and reiterated later, that....

> subjects at the primary school level are highly concrete and literal in the approach to the task representing a low point both in the appreciation and the production of the metaphor.

However in their final paragraph the researchers noted that.... "it is always possible that some factor(s) in the developmental or educational process militates against the production of original and metaphoric endings." In that caveat, and in what constitutes the notion of metaphor, may lie

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[9] Gardner, H., Kircher, M., Winner, E. and Perkins, D., Children's Metaphoric Productions and Preferences, in J. Child Language, (1974, p. 125-141

much that could confound such an apparently neat and unequivocal summation of children's production and response to metaphor.

There are here, warning notes to be sounded and it is important to remember that although synaesthetic connections, drawing on more than one perceptual modality, are already being made by children when they come to school, Gardner's research suggests that, once they have progressed beyond the stage where the literal/non-literal distinction is still blurred, figurative language is in abeyance because of the urgent need to establish accurate meaning, to be part of the 'social consensus' of language. It is possible however that if one symbolic mode (language) is temporarily closed to the development of metaphor, another, in this case, drawing, takes on the role instead.

Setting aside for the moment Gardner's observations on the more literal functioning of language at this stage in a child's development, and before expanding on the emergent possibilities of metaphoric imagery in other modes, the work of Arnheim shows just what an important, if neglected issue, in cognition that imaging is. Like Langer, Arendt and many others before, he also stresses the primacy of vision in thought. Not concept - percept.

Perception is abstraction and is therefore the origin of productive thinking.

To begin with analytic and syncretistic thought is to omit what ought to be

the initial concern - the percept. Capacity for thought is developed "by handling situations presented through the senses" ... and " 'abstract' concepts of the academic variety are late products of special cultural conditions."[10]

Traditional views of abstraction have seen it as a withdrawal from direct experience and a 'sweeping clean' of perceptual material from the mind. Perception and thinking are thus seen as two discrete entities. If, however, we take seriously the idea that both syncretistic and analytic thinking modes are essential to creative cognition, then no such dichotomy can be entertained.

Amheim is convinced that ...

> the value of visual presentation is no longer contested by anybody... (*but that we still*)... need to acknowledge that perceptual and pictorial shapes are not only translations of thought products but the very flesh and blood of thinking itself and that our unbroken range of visual presentation leads from the humble gesture of daily communication to the statements of great art.[11]

He reminds us of the role of gesture and its metaphoric use which demonstrates not only that human beings are naturally aware of the structural resemblance uniting physical and non physical

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[10] Arnheim, R., 201

[11] Ibid., 134

> objects or events; one must go further and assert that the perceptual qualities of shape and motion are present in the very act of thinking depicted by the gestures and are in fact the medium in which thinking itself takes place.[12]
>
> In the perception of shape lie the beginnings of concept formation.[13]

For example, things seen as 'round' are often approximations of roundness, or in other words, we have a percept of roundness.

> Strictly speaking, no percept ever refers to a unique individual shape but rather to a kind of pattern of which the percept consists.... There is there fore no difference in principle between percept and concept, quite in keeping with the biological function of perception. In order to be useful, perception must instruct about kinds of thing; otherwise organisms could not profit from experience.[14]

When considering the part played by language in thought, Amheim takes a somewhat unusual perspective. So often we think of the referents of words, of their meanings without realising the full extent to which they belong in the realm of perceptual experience, and language "is a set of perceptual shapes - auditory, kinaesthetic [and] visual." He draws attention to the complexity of even so-called 'primitive' music with its dazzling array of structural variables and the musical thinking which occurs entirely within the "formal resources or the medium itself."

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[12] Ibid., 118

[13] Ibid., 27

[14] Ibid., 28

Verbal language, however, is considerably more restricted because although there is tremendous variety of sound, noise or rhythm, this does not guarantee structural complexity and he believes this aspect of speech pattern is quite limited.

> Words or word sequences can vary in length and rhythm; they are all composed of a limited number of elements, and they can produce assonances and other auditory and visual resemblances. However, these perceptual dimensions of language are structurally so amorphous that nothing at all complex can be built of them. Compared with even the simplest musical tune, the sound pattern of a poem is a largely irrational sequence of noises sustained by some regular meter and by some phrasing of pitch and rhythm.[15]

While this shows a lack of appreciation of tone, pitch and stress complexity as revealed in the work of David Brazil and colleagues, the relation of which is inextricably linked with semantic aspects, Arnheim stresses that he is talking about language exclusively as perceptual shape, that is - what can come across to a listener who does not understand a word.

The realisation then is forced upon us that language sounds achieve most of their subtlety and beauty through borrowed clothing - from reference to intended meaning. There are ways in which common elements in a word can be used for grouping - for example rhyme or verbal categories created through the same suffix or prefix; however these do not have a productive yield in structural terms. That is to say nouns and verbs are

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[15] Arnheim, R., Visual Thinking, 229-230

separated because of different sounds but this as a sound pattern gives nothing further, just as the linear sequence of words in a sentence is an obvious structural feature of which little use is made by comparison with the musical structure of a melody. Arnheim goes further ....

> purely verbal thinking is the prototype of thoughtless thinking, the automatic recourse to connections retrieved from storage. It is useful but sterile.[16]

A strong claim!

He claims superiority for the visual medium because of the structural equivalents it offers for

> all characteristics of objects, events [and] relations ... and because it can represent shapes in two-D and three-D space as against the one dimension of verbal language.

(It can of course - see Gombrich - also offer a bewildering quality of illusion and I am uncertain that it necessarily readily represents isomorphically the dimensions needed for theoretical reasoning- though clearly it can.)

Arnheim's consideration of thought imagery is particularly pertinent to the way children work with visual narrative and takes into account the difficulties experienced with the visual replication of relations expressed in,

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[16] Ibid., Chp.13

for example, 'if', 'because', 'like', 'although', 'either/or' and so on. Freud had raised the question of the logical links of reasoning in images in his work on dreams. He placed dream images and the visual arts on one side and mental images for thought on the other.

Arnheim puts it succinctly -

> the principal difference is that thought imagery, in order to fulfil its function, must embody all the aspects of reasoning since this imagery is the medium in which thought takes shape. A dream or painting on the other hand, is the product of thoughts, ...[17]

Dreams, Freud tells us can, like language at times, omit the logical links, suggesting the logical relations simply by sequence, by juxtaposition (cartoon strips can also emulate this) and leave the reader to supply the missing connections. If it is properly done, the elided 'bits' are recoverable from the context. But in thought imagery this is just not possible. "What is not given shape is not there and cannot be supplied from elsewhere"... Arnheim says.

On a number of occasions throughout this research, and particularly when gathering the data, the image through which the reader 'sees' has been a disquieting undercurrent. It is for example, difficult to engage in the

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[17] Ibid., 241

discussion of what we see when we read, without grappling with the lack of clear discrete images.

Iser in *The Act of Reading* offers the explanation of text as formulated pattern to guide the reader -

> a structured indicator to guide the imagination of the reader; and so the meaning can only be grasped as an image. The image provides the filling for what the textual pattern structures but leaves out.

It does not however ....

> represent something that exists; on the contrary, it brings into existence something that is to be found neither outside the book nor on its printed pages.[18]

The poem, as T.S. Eliot told us so long ago, is somewhere between the page and the reader- perceptually.

However on reflection there need be no conflict here between the cartoon, the fixed visual image, and the fluid, amorphous reader-construct, since the process under study is more that of an interchange of symbolic phrasing. The letters and through them, the words, are fixed - the structure.

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[18] Iser, W., The Act of Reading, 9

The 'reading' process from the visual narrative is not quite so creative in the sense that the image is more firmly determined and making reader-space is harder. Where it exists it is concerned with action, plot and intention in respect of illocutionary gap and not so much with character appearance or setting. Poor quality film and t.v. can eliminate this interaction because the creator has not established an interactive space - not that it cannot be done but popular programmes aim to entertain, to develop the hermeneutic code, not to make the audience or viewer think. It would be interesting to investigate how youngsters who 'tune in' to the sounds of story react to the sound effects track of film including the music.

In what is under consideration here, the drafting process is the key. It enables the seeing differently, the manipulation of visual images and pattern to say the same thing in a different form, and thus, like the good metaphor helps us to 'see' anew.

When children draw cartoons they are using an interaction of verbal and visual percepts. Expressing a narrative, a story, usually means that at times the logical progression needs to be clarified by, if possible, a visually symbolic equivalent of a conjunction or preposition but when this fails they then borrow the actual word . Interaction between verbal concept and visual percept in action.

However right Arnheim may be, once we have language the thought process is inevitably changed and for most people the percept is an inextricable combination of word and image.

Slobin underlined the ordering of sentences in terms of human-centred action and the tendency of all languages to use metaphors based on the human body. Arnheim, similarly exploring figurative language through the work of Whorf, examines concepts describing "non-perceptual" facts which are actually derived from perceptual ones. "Mental depth is not thinkable without an awareness of physical depth."[19] Prepositions and conjunctions all derive their meaning from perceptual origins.

Thought imagery, he tells us, (unlike dreams and paintings) can combine several layers of abstractness in one sensory operation. I have doubts concerning his bracketing of paintings in this context with dreams, however he goes on to say that we are then in the realm of highly theoretical relations which are best represented by very abstract 'topological shapes' (by their invariant characteristics). Some conjunctions and prepositions actually point to various kinds of spatial action and act as barriers to the flow of actions - like 'but' - whereas others push the action along - 'because' and 'although'- which, though they may add complication do not hinder the progress.

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[19] Arnheim, R. Visual Thinking. 232

Where language is truly invaluable is in the task of stabilising entities and concepts. The perceptible world slides so readily into a continuum. The example quoted is that of trees with a seemingly endless variety which shift gently into the category of shrubs and so on. Language can offer a clean, discrete sign for each type. The verbal label can present a 'nicely segregated unit' giving a much neater inventory of visual concepts.

'Types' are then allotted their own "unique, discernible sign."

Arnheim hits out at linguistic determinism.

> Words are like pointers that single out significant peaks from the unbroken contour line of a mountain range on the horizon. The peaks are not created by the pointers. They are given objectively: but the pointers fortify the observer's urge to discriminate them.
>
> Once you add the spatial dimension of percepts to the linear sequence of language, the mind has a four dimensional world to operate in (intellectual thinking). [20]

The problem as he sees it is that...

> The simultaneity of spatial and visual thought is dismantled and even linear relations are transformed into uni-directional succession; even though the verbal medium is not forced to be linear, either on the page or orally, it usually is. 'Cherries on trees' cannot be depicted in the verbal phrase ... they become more of an enumeration of three concepts.[21]

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[20] Ibid., 236

[21] Ibid., 24-7

Surely there is some debate about this? Language frequently acts as a bridge between image and image and what it conjures up can refer us back to that simultaneity of vision - as in 'cherries on trees'. Simultaneous interaction though is much harder to convey in words and "evoked action tends to remain linear."

Having established that visual perception does not operate just as a mere collector of information, but is concerned with the grasping of generalities, ought to affect the use we make of it in education. The thought mechanisms of abstraction operate in direct perception but they also work in the sense that concepts can be manipulated through the interaction of direct perception with stored experience. If this leads, as it surely must, to the promotion of more conscious use of perceptual abstraction in the classroom we must also remember to maintain contact with empirical reality because "abstraction leads so easily to detachment."[22] Consequently Arnheim aware of the dangers, warns that using visual aids does not of itself provide a climate congenial for visual thinking.

> Visual education must be based on the premise that every picture is a statement. The picture does not present the object itself but a set of propositions about the object; or, if you prefer, it presents the object as a set of propositions.[23]

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[22] Ibid., 307

[23] Ibid., 308

If then the pictures, illustrations, maps and so on, fail to do this for a child then they are more confusing than no image at all.

In one sense there is a crying need to agree with Arnheim that the role of language is so often overrated but it is dangerous to do so while society generally judges its individuals so readily through their control of the spoken and written word.

Ultimately we have to accept that whether we are working visually or verbally when we abstract, organize, emphasise or select, no matter what the surface differences, the process is essentially the same.

A brief mention of the role of humour comes at this juncture because of its functional similarity to metaphor. It is actually a significant link for metaphor and cartoon and cartoon is, with its own, almost inevitable element of humour, given prominence as a half-way house between fully representational (mimetic) paintings and symbols or signs at the other extreme. It is here because of its connection with the creative process and also since it is bound to be a key factor in the cartoon scripts. *Stealing Oil* begins to demonstrate some of these issues and how they all have to combine to give coherent, autonomous text.

In a broadcast on Radio 4 in June 1989 discussing creativity, the participants summarised by saying that humour is a necessary part of the

creative process and that without it there could be no creativity because it consists in seeing the other side. Listeners were referred to puns and jokes. In fact this is probably to put things the wrong way about. Humour and creativity of whatever sort, spring into being because the creator *does* see the other side - the same sort of process that Piagetians the world over have called decentring.

Frank Smith, himself a splendid example of someone whose thinking changed others by changing understanding of the reading process, has his own theory of creativity. Reminding his readers of Kelly and his 'constructs', Smith talks about the construction of meaning and equates it with creating possible worlds and checking their correspondence to the 'real' world. Imaginative thinking is creating the 'other' side, the alternative possibility which is a learning process.

He then goes on to quote Susan Sontag's definition of thought ....

> an insatiable project, endlessly producing and consuming 'systems' (which are) metaphor-haunted classifications of an ultimately opaque reality.....[24]

The links between thought process, metaphor, joke and cartoon begin to seem very strong.

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[24] Sontag, S., in Writing and the Writer, 167

Nor need we stop there remembering Langer's emphasis on the dichotomy between discursive and presentational forms.

> The use of metaphor can hardly be called a conscious device. It is more the power whereby... new words are born and merely analogical meanings become stereotyped into literal definitions. (Slang is almost entirely far-fetched metaphor. Although much of it is conscious and humorous in intent, there is always a certain amount of peculiarly apt and expressive slang which is ultimately taken into literary language as 'good usage'.)[25]

One clear, automatic association with a cartoon figure is JOKE and jokes work, as has already been suggested, similarly to metaphor. Three components are required - two to interact and the third is the new, the resultant insight. The tension caused by the contiguity of the first two components is resolved in the third.

In 1905 Freud explored the technique of jokes in *Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious.* Quite simply he reduced the joke with its essential abbreviation to two elements for comparison which created the third, the joke or punch line. The compression may be at the level of word-compounding as in A. A. Brill's examination of the subject (1911 Freud's *Theory of Wit* J. of Abnormal Psychology 6, p.279.) when he quoted De Quincy's... "old people are inclined to fall into their anecdotage..." and a short story where Christmas holidays were referred to as 'alcoholidays'.

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[25] Langer, S., Philosophy in a New Key, 141

Break these elements down to explain and they are not funny. The essence of jokes is their brevity no matter what the length of their 'telling time'.

> A joke says what it has to say, not always in a few words, but in too few words - that is , in words that are insufficient by strict logic or common modes of thought and speech. It may actually say what it has to say by not saying it.

> We have already learnt from the connection of jokes with caricature that they must bring forward something that is concealed or 'hidden.' I lay stress on this determinant once more, because it too has more to do with the nature of jokes than with their being part of the comic.[26]

A proper appreciation of the excellence and functional operation of many cartoons which acknowledges fully what they have to offer with regard to ambiguity and metaphorical usage seems not to have been written. That such drawings can be a metaphor in themselves is beautifully illustrated by Philipon's *Les Poires* in which the incongruity of Louis Philippe's head with the shape of a pear increases progressively because pear equals 'fathead'. (Le Charivan 1834.)

Once any kind of interpretation of physical features has been made by a good cartoonist it is very difficult to see the subject or 'victim' in another light. Several public figures lampooned in the now defunct *Spitting Image*

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[26] Freud, S., Jokes and the Unconscious

seem almost less real than their flexible masks. Gombrich reminds us that in art discoveries are not of likeness and a strict matching

> but of equivalences which enable us to see reality in terms of an image and an image in terms of reality. And this equivalence never rests on the likeness of elements so much as on the identity of responses to certain relationships.[27]

Creativity demands a certain level of intelligence, an element of persistence and a leavening dash of humour. I was - am - at a loss to explain why the humour which appeared in cartoons of the children creating them in a quite sophisticated way did not usually appear in a similar piece of written work until the two forms were linked. Pupils tend to treat their written texts with a great deal of gravity; that probably has a lot to do with the hidden messages teachers convey. Education so often is such an abysmally serious business.

Jokes figure quite prominently in the picture narratives and, although for the less artistic, the drawings featured only those items which the pupils felt able to sketch, not being very gifted did not stop either ingenuity of ideas or humour.

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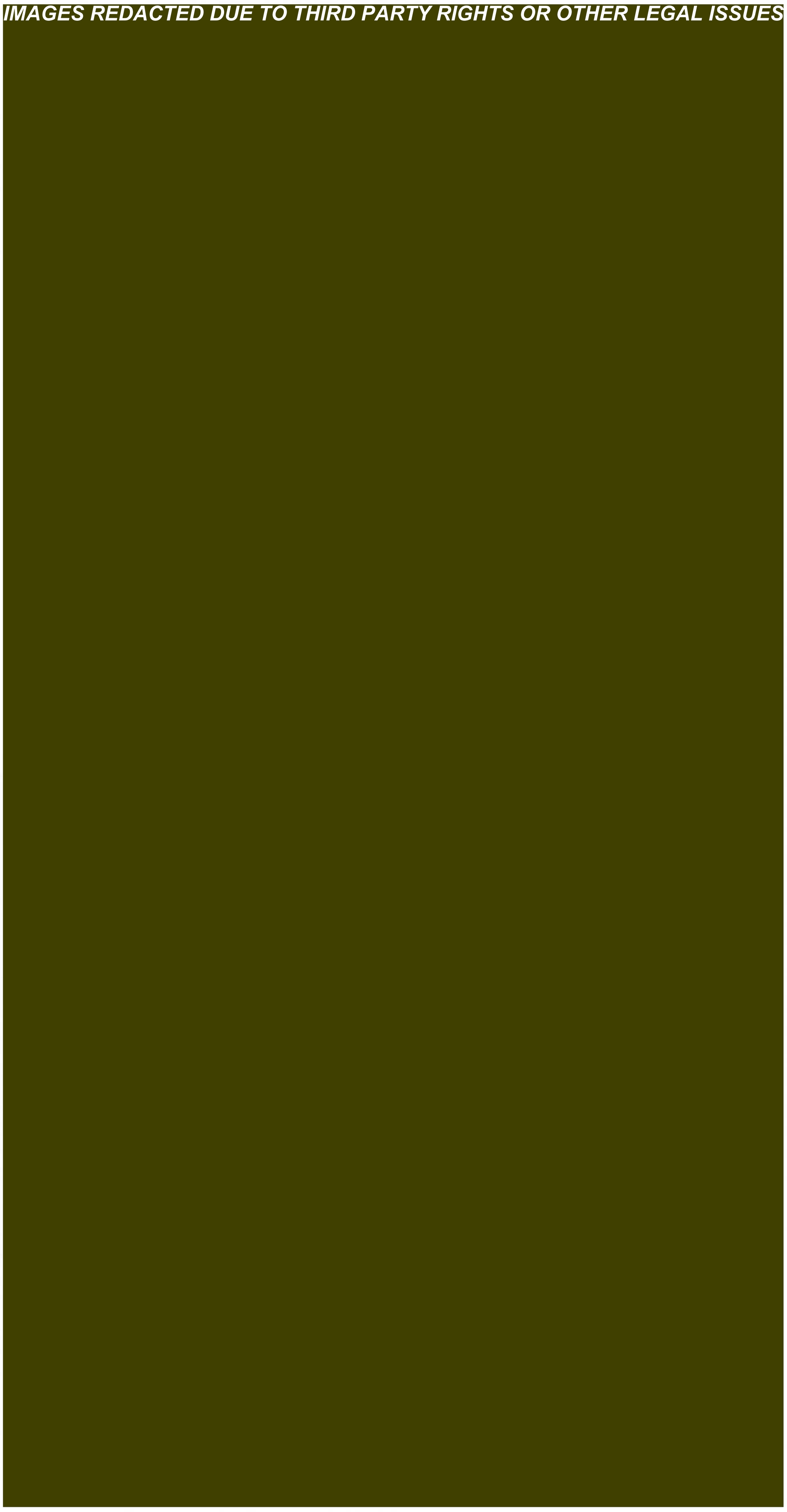
[27] Gombrich, E.H., Art and Illusion, 292

IMAGES REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

One young cartoonist after protesting loudly that she could not draw, designed the strip *Stealing Oil*. The metaphor of American wealth - oil and big 'gas guzzling' automobiles is pretty obvious - and really only marginally spoiled by her lack of appreciation that cars run on petrol or 'gas' not oil! The other examples of metaphoric usage were quite conscious and deliberate - the stage coach (frame 2) and the caskets in frame 5. Unlike *Six Feet Under* it is a modern myth, based presumably on *Dallas.*

What has happened of course is that just as young writers reflect the models of stories they encounter, so comics and magazines provided the visual models in this. Often the visual mode is given strong support in becoming a narrative from the addition of a verbal commentary; *Stealing Oil* is heavily supported in this way. Certainly though cohesion and coherence have to be handled very differently.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Jacqueline Goodnow, in her book *Children's Drawing* -Fontana 1977, studied children actively engaged in learning, abstracting and extending rules and principles they had encountered. She refers to the search for order which is part of intellectual growth in art and cites Drora Booth's reflection on the "capacity to discover and use transformation in both art and science (which) might depend on a common underlying intellectual growth."[28] It is regrettable that pattern in art is so often sacrificed to drawing and the search for realism.

In this short but important volume, comic strip conventions are also considered. For example Goodnow examines the left to right format and the equivalence of some relationships to the real world (e.g. hair in wind), while also showing other conventions which have the status of metaphor. Later in the book she reveals the way in which developing human figures, and especially clothed figures, in children's graphic work show planning and thinking ahead. Graphic work, she tells us, is 'visible' thinking and illustrates both ...

> their thinking and ours. The features it displays - thrift, conservatism, principles of organization and sequence - are features of all problem-solving, whether by children or adults.[29]

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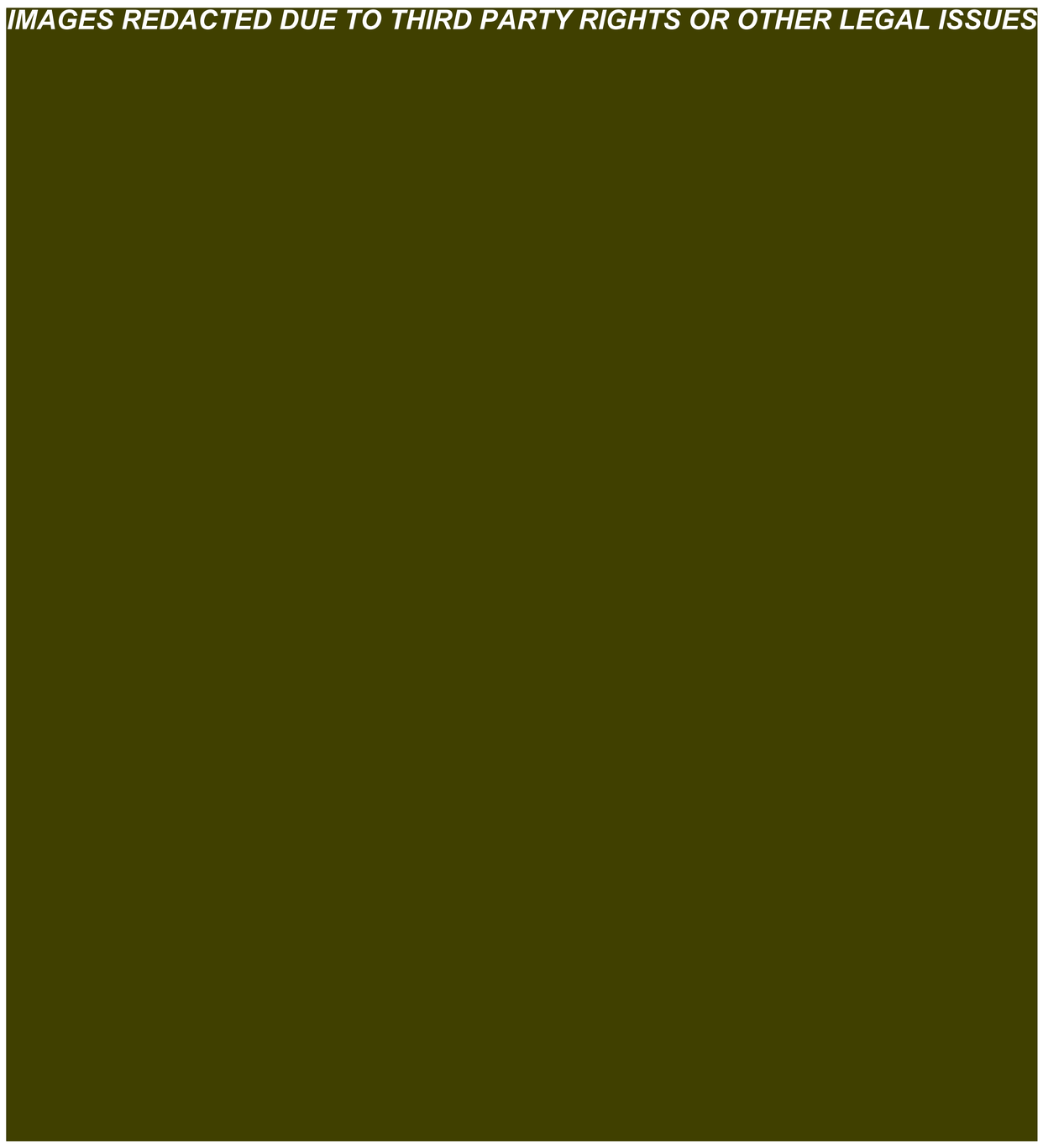
[28] Booth, D., in Goodnow, J., Children's Drawing, 139-40

[29] Goodnow, J., Children's Drawing



Many children, when they hear stories, may grasp Goodman's dictum ... "In the beginning (of a narrative) anything is possible; in the middle things become probable; in the ending everything is necessary," ... but find it difficult to replicate in their own writing. In fact doing so is quite an advanced skill. The comic strip or strip form struggling to achieve coherence, keeps the imaginative leaps to a minimum and thereby allows easy progression to the reader. It also insists that the writer/composer creates a visual text which does the same. It can be a significant lesson in cohesion.[30]

It is not true however that such visual creations cannot teach flashback; it is more difficult but the traditional 'thinks' bubbles can prepare us for such an experience given that the time lag in respect of the putative action is sufficient to make it visually clear that we are seeing a scene from an

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[30] Graham, J., Pictures on the Page, N.A.T.E., 1990

earlier period . The argument that we process pictures strictly chronologically in much the same way as we process real life, is not sufficient. On one level we process words chronologically too, in the time it takes to read the novel (Genette's 'actual' time). Moreover, as the book points out, illustrators of the quality of a Raymond Briggs can also regulate the pace of viewing, allowing bubbles to break frame, changing colours and cross-sectioning and so on. The simplest story can foster literary convention, the secret is in the involvement of the reader and her or his imagination.

From such models as illustrated stories, comic strips and advertising slogans children learn about visual metaphor. In this world of visual thought, Rudolph Arnheim's promulgation of the percept rather than the concept, is an exploration in part at least of the kind of processes called upon when children are asked to design a specifically graphic narrative.

Creative thinking can be detected in the metaphoric level where the referential level of text is subjected to further thought. It is part of the alteration of focus and may result in joke, metaphor, simile, proverbial expression and, hopefully, originality of word use and imagery. It can also be seen when children begin to revise their own texts, as even quite young children do, both at the level of content and surface features, when encouraged to draft. Comic strip creation at the very least, with its sequence of frames keeps the illocutionary gaps to a minimum to preserve

coherence. This makes them easy to read but also means that when the tables are turned and children are asked to create some strips of their own they are forced into an awareness of the reader and taught a lesson in cohesion.

Children's written language may appear to avoid the ornamentation of metaphor but the cartoon drawing could not easily do without it even if we argue that some of those metaphors, like their verbal counterparts, have become frozen. There is much support for the argument that we begin with the metaphorical and move towards the referential.

Summary:

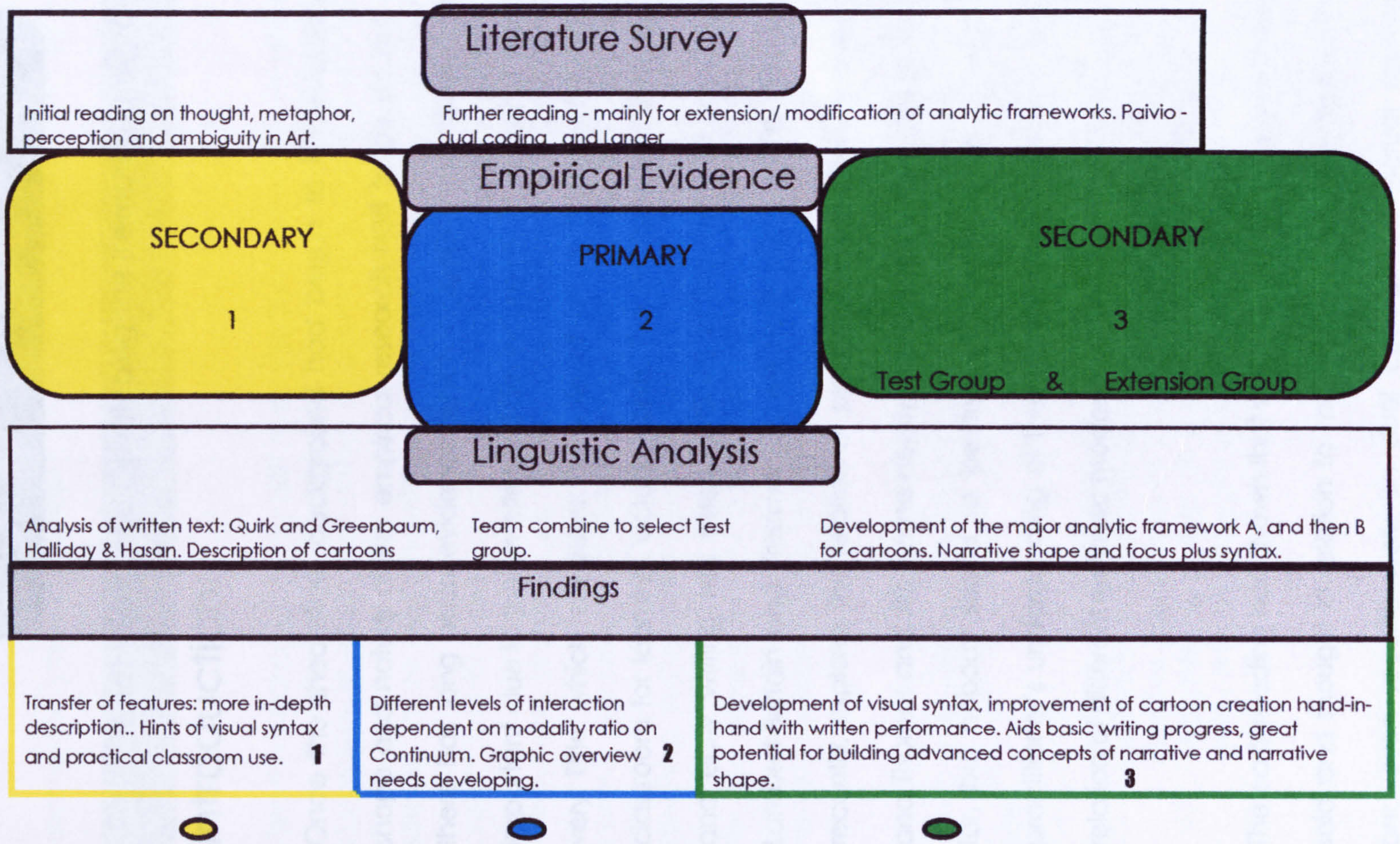
This chapter has concentrated particularly on the role of imaging in thought and possible ways visual narrative material can assist this more successfully in the classroom. There is also stress on the inevitable element, given the form chosen, of humour at the level of children's jokes; this is because the manner in which jokes operate has affinity with metaphor which in its turn has links with creative thinking. From a further theoretical perspective, Iser's conception of text structuring the imaginal filling of a novel and Arnheim's assertion that thought is an inextricable combination of word and image, all help to strengthen the case for such kinds of work.

Gardner's thesis that metaphor disappears when children are struggling to understand the literal aspects of language may perhaps be questioned if

we offer pupils the option of working in more than one modality. Putting pictorial narrative into the equation means offering certain freedoms from the written or printed word but it also raises other cognitive issues. At the less ambitious level of mere illustrational representation or symbolic patterning children can experiment fairly freely but as they move along the continuum towards more explicit pictorial story the nature of logical relations becomes - not impossible - but certainly more difficult. Some pupils solve this with juxtapositioning, sequencing or using grammatically equivalent signs and at this point they then have a narrative which allows them ready access to an overview of form.

It is at this stage that various indicators are emerging, which retrospectively suggest, as indeed happened, that the mid range of cartoon, those narratives which exploited both picture and the word, would prove to be the most useful in advancing both thinking and, more specifically, understanding and control of the narrative form.

Stages in the Research Process



CHAPTER SIX

Establishing and Developing the Research Design

Introduction:

Once the theoretical background had begun to be established, the shape and nature of the empirical research had to be set out. Though there has long been evidence which suggests that children's art is an important clue to their intellectual development, it becomes obvious that very little which considers the role of art or the visual image in the classroom for learning, actually exists. The link between drawing abilities and early writing has been outlined in the work of such people as Lambert-Brittain and Freeman as we have seen. Judith Graham, more recently, explores the relation of picture and text for very early readers, and Thomas and Silk outline neatly the state of knowledge in this area so far, but nobody seems to be trying to fill the vacuum which is the practitioner's understanding of the use of visual representation and the relation of different symbolic modes in learning for pupils in school.

The early reading had shown that while there was much which had been said and thought in relation to metaphor, metaphoric forms of thinking and even specific work on dual coding, any actual exploration of children's thinking and their response to particular classroom innovations

was fairly limited. However the writing of people like Arnheim and Paivio was sufficient to encourage a return to the cartoons from the initial secondary group (composed of years Seven and Eight) to begin a tentative exploration.

Given a background in English teaching, the obvious way to examine the interaction of visual and verbal modes of working in a school setting seemed to be through written and cartoon narrative. The ideas for this project had thus evolved as a process of continual interaction between theory and practice over many years with the seeds embedded in interests predating my teaching experience. With a personal history where teaching, studying and researching co-existed for me as part of everyday life, the reflexive form of action research, seems looking back, to be an almost inevitable course to have taken.

When action research in schools first began to be taken seriously Jon Nixon said,

> There is no single way of doing research in the classroom. The methods employed will depend to a large extent on the skills of the teacher, the nature of the research problem and the resources available. And that....It is essential that teachers work from their own particular strengths when developing the research.[1]

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[1] Nixon, J., A Teachers' Guide to Action Research, (1981, p.13)

He also underlined that in action research

> Intervention is an intrinsic part of the research and not a separate phase undertaken to evaluate the effect of the innovation.

This was especially true of this investigation, particularly when different approaches to the art work had to be taught. Planned intervention had also been an integral part of the cross-curricular enterprise with the mixed Year Seven and Eight secondary group cited in the very first instance.

Perhaps more importantly, although ... "Outside observers may be able to offer fresh perspectives on, and alternative interpretations of, what goes on in the classroom....", this research is about a need to understand not an attempt to predict. Teachers engaged in action research with a class known to them ... "have the opportunity to tease out their own curiosities, questionings *[and]* reflections ..."[2]

A long term study might offer a more detailed view of the role of this type of working in English and help to answer many of the questions which have arisen in addition to those with which I began. This however, was not an option. I had an all too brief opportunity to look at such methodology with an interesting age range, Years Six to Eight[3]. Whatever the shortcomings in relation to the time available and the methods used, it

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[2] Jackson, D., in A Teachers' Guide to Action Research, Jon Nixon, p52

was a chance not to be missed. One which shed light, if only a little, on what, properly used, I firmly believe to be an invaluable learning tool.

This chapter comprises a more detailed description of the order and the form which the research took. The first examples of empirical work came from children in a middle-ring secondary comprehensive in Birmingham (1). That work was the result of a course combining music, art, drama and English with years Seven and Eight working together in groups.

Analysis of some of the more enterprising cartoons revealed the need to ask questions about this approach in more general terms in the first instance. This was achieved by working in a Handsworth Junior School with a year Six class(2). This stage, with all its attendant problems, was used to explore children's use of illustration vis-à-vis narrative and to determine what more specific interrogation of the process would shed light on what was actually happening.

The last phase (3), despite the speed with which it had to be executed, was more carefully structured in an attempt to uncover the nature of the interaction between picture and word. Thus the section headed Research Design and Analytic Procedures really only relates to work from the final

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[3] Middle School range in Staffs.

part (3) gathered in the secondary sector, although the modified structures for analysis were then reapplied to empirical samples from earlier stage.

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Methodology: the research design.

The chart of the stages of the work (see page 181) is accurate respecting the order in which the various stages of the research occurred but it does not indicate the constant revisiting of the texts, the literature or the frequent modifying of the analysis in the light of the actual data, which went on.

From the original cross curricular course in a middle ring, secondary school, close examination of two texts (narrative cartoons) and one piece of additional writing, had stimulated the initial fairly general questions concerning the nature of children's learning when they are encouraged to work in more than one modality. The findings at this point resulted in the decision to proceed in a relatively unstructured manner and use the data to throw up further ideas. Anything more rigidly determined would, at this time, I felt have closed down options.

An opportunity then arose which gave me access to a Year Six classroom to explore the areas of narrative and illustration. At this juncture I was

looking for salient indicators of the way forward; hints of what might be usefully taken further. As the work was completed the scripts were carefully scrutinised.

The Primary sessions involved making use of the use of visual presentation in the classroom generally but also showed how translating narrative into drawings and then back again into a written form seemed to help improve both the quality and the length of the narrative. (c.f. *Six Feet Under*) There appeared to be some relatively simple, plausible explanations for this. For one thing the amount of visual as compared with printed written input for children now is greatly increased and, for another, there is the memorable character of visual and especially cartoon material to consider - the latter at least in part because of the element of humour. There is also the compressed and economical nature of ideas presented in a visual form which makes an overall grasp so much easier.

This second phase of the empirical work was designed to produce written texts accompanied by illustrations of various sorts. It was an opportunity to try to explore slightly younger children's relations with art work and writing - generally but not necessarily, narrative. So despite Gardener's warning that this was the literal phase, I chose quite deliberately to use illustration and cartoon in a relatively unstructured way allowing children space to respond. I needed to know what they knew - were there other, interesting

possibilities for development in addition to those which I had seen in *Six Feet Under*?

Because by now the earlier broad questions had changed and the analysis, though still requiring a little reshaping, needed to be much more focussed and a quasi-experimental form was used.

The Teaching Programme: *gathering the data.*

Secondary: Stage 1

The original data used (*Six Feet Under* and *Stealing Oil*) had come from a programme of integrated studies. Music, drama, art and English were taken in combination and, in a falling roll context, staffed generously. The classes involved were Years Seven and Eight. Despite an inauspicious educational climate, it was an exciting venture designed to help some who were slow learners and others who had consistently under-achieved over their years of schooling.

The programme had been devised to use music, drama and art in conjunction with discussion periods, together, of course, with the printed word, to try to stimulate or create the need to write. Certainly we had evidence of considerable behavioural improvement and increased co-operation in group work but we also seemed to have hints that there was

a small but significant shift towards better written responses. The details of these findings were recorded in the first chapter.

Primary: Stage 2

The next phase of empirical work was to be a more structured collecting of evidence but, as has been said, the focus still needed to be fairly broad. Using story, poetry and illustration, the emphasis was on the illustrative factor. The programme was deliberately interventionist, stressing the importance of illustration and endeavouring to raise the status of drawing, painting or collage building efforts of the Primary group. If Gardner was right about metaphor, (and metaphoric thinking) vanishing in the face of the increased literalism of an age group trying very hard to make exact meanings, then this process would prove extremely difficult.

However, since whatever else happened, the children gave a convincing impression of enjoyment, it just might be that the lack of evidence of metaphor found by him and the under valuing of drawing, reflects at least in part, children's response to adult behaviour and hidden messages in the curriculum.

Secondary: Stage 3

The English year groups in this particular, city secondary school, in a mainly white, working class area, had a few Asian children and an even smaller number of Afro-Caribbean youngsters. They were divided into three broad ability bands. A top band, Year Eight class was the group I was allowed to use and I saw them once a week for a single, thirty-five minute period.

By this time, having looked at narrative development or stages the idea was to try, as with *Six Feet Under*, to explore the differences in response if the parts of a story were drafted one way round rather than the other - that is to say, first half cartoon, second half written and vice versa.

Quite obviously this was going to be complicated by any number of factors, not least because in the light of earlier comments, whereas I believe that there is a good case for saying that good imaginative writing is very much harder than personal writing (Dixon and Stratta), when you start to play with the world of illustration and cartoon, simply because of the kinds of models available and the draughtsmanship required, it is very much easier to handle the imaginative side. Imaginative cartoon stories have many more readily and easily accessible models, often of reasonable quality, than are likely to be available for pictorial representation of personal or autobiographical writing.

In this way I began an attempt to study the process of interaction between visual and verbal symbols and ultimately the effect that it might have on the creativity and development of the children's writing. If Paivio and his colleagues were right about the way we encode our ideas and thinking in both a verbal and visual format, it seemed a particularly fruitful avenue to explore.

The programme of work for the final phase with Year Eight was a rather rushed affair. Rather cursorily I explored various ways in which they might avoid the need to draw well. It was a technique which had paid off with the Year Six pupils and I wish there had been more time to pursue it thoroughly with this group.

I felt that for this class, as with the younger ones, models would be helpful and used various kinds of narrative, some wholly imaginative as with *The Monster Garden,* the Nerguls, fairy tales and so on, while with autobiographically based stories in mind, we briefly explored the diary format -*Adrian Mole* being the most obvious. We discussed cartoons, comics and the selection of the salient features of people we knew well to try to represent them graphically. *Spitting Image* was then a current, long-running television production which was useful and we also looked at some film of *Gawain and the Green Knight.*

At various points the class were asked to start the story in cartoon and then complete part two in writing, or vice versa, rather than creating an entire cartoon form. The aim had been to see what features carried from one mode to the other. Partly, because of the time factor this was not wholly successful. Another reason may have been that the children, under pressure, had forgotten which order had been requested, or that occasionally that they were carried away by their own creation. There were some interesting and useful developments arising from this idea though and they are discussed later. As the data came in attempting to encourage a fully pictorial cartoon was abandoned in favour of concentration on the interaction between the drawing and the writing because the combined modalities usually offered much more in respect of a teaching tool than the wholly visual work.

Despite lack of classroom time, the children took stories home to finish with such alacrity that I was overwhelmed by the material. I hope the selection made was the right one - I may have missed much since my understanding of what exactly I was looking for grew along with the amassing of data and the refining of the analysis.

Using the distinctions of personal and imaginative writing (Dixon and Stratta) which helped to form the framework for the analysis, I had begun the classwork with the personal aspect. However it was soon obvious that

in cartoon, narrative personal accounts were much more difficult since the tendency there was to assume the need for fully representational draughtsmanship. Nevertheless many children persevered and produced some surprisingly successful results.

Research Design and Analytic Procedures:

With the help of a small team of teacher-assessors I set out to select a number of pupils to be monitored over a period of time in an attempt to evaluate their achievements. The team came from different areas of education: one member was a head of English noted for her extreme accuracy in the prediction of GCSE result levels, one was a primary deputy-head with MDU (ESL) experience and one was a head of drama whose detailed analysis of scripts and whose sympathetic marking methods in relation to her English groups had borne fruit in their subsequent achievement over many years. When everyone had had an opportunity to read all the papers, the first joint meeting was held to discuss the criteria used for determining the rank order. We collaborated over the initial screening of the scripts and then a paper by Dixon and Stratta provided the structure for much of the subsequent, more detailed, investigation to show the pupils' current performance and to pave the way for long-term measurement of syntactical and general writing ability .

We only ranked those pupils from whom we were able to obtain a script from the preceding year. Thus we began with fifteen scripts and reduced these to seven which represented a cross-section of ability within the group and was deemed a manageable sample to investigate closely. After that came further reading, with the emphasis this time on the more pragmatic aspects of the empirical work and classroom practice[4], which assisted in the development of a more directed frame for the analysis.

During our discussion of the texts, the interdependent nature of many of the criteria we had used was underlined and may be seen in the chart below. The next task was to devise a rather more structured approach to the actual work the children were to complete for the experiment than had been possible at the earlier stage in the Junior school. Before we actually began the ordering we discussed the criteria we had each been working with. They were, unsurprisingly, very similar in all cases. Tidied and assembled under various headings they looked like this:-

[4] Dixon and Stratta; K. Perera; Halliday and Hasan

The Initial Criteria Used for Selection:

Surface Features	Style	Extra-textual Features	Narrative Structure
punctuation	vocabulary	communicative	events
spelling	sentence length	success	reporting
paragraphing	effective use of	audience awareness	elements of
	speech/dialogue	focalization	personal
	imagery/		writing
	imaginative stance		

The seven pupils selected using their Year Seven scripts in order of merit, were Esther, Vicky, Karen, Hazel, Saba, Andrew Co., and Andrew Ch. (There was reasonable agreement with regard to the top and bottom of the list but we haggled over the middle range.)

Having by this time having firmly decided on narrative as the vehicle, a simple effective method of teaching about it with some sense of logical progression was needed which would cohere with a similar programme in a visual format - something with perhaps the analytical clarity of a structuralist design but with simpler and more ' user-friendly' terminology. I also needed a way to structure the subsequent scrutiny of all the stories, both written and, more importantly, cartoon.

The general background establishing the multi-faceted character of

narrative and including reference to the act of writing had come through the thinking of such people as Frank Smith, James Moffet and Douglas Hesse, while more recently the writing of structuralists like Genette and Rimmon-Kenan has shed more light onto how narrative actually 'works'. However more was needed, and, in order to consider individual pupils' progress, a method of analysing the texts at sentence level and, later, the visual equivalent for the cartoons was devised. For this a combination of Halliday and Hasan's study of cohesion and Katherine Perera's exploration *Children's Writing* provided the main input.

Narrative involves levels of thinking and levels of abstraction in ways which are at once both very similar to, and very different from, more discursive or transactional writing. When I remembered children writing reports on race relations for earlier research, it was clear that uncertainty about audience led to a lack of clarity in the text. It was to some of this earlier written work that I then turned, in that I used a similar approach to the analysis of the scripts.

Some of the more interesting and adventurous work which is considered in Chapter Nine had not been under scrutiny in the first experimental batch because in most instances there had not been any year seven work to assess and from which to form a judgement as to what progress or changes had occurred in their writing.

The way in which the texts were to be scrutinised was obviously essential and the key to the whole enterprise. Whatever structure I used through which to view the data, would select some factors and omit others. In addition, in order to ground the theory thoroughly in evidence collected I had genuinely tried to keep as open a mind as I could, structuring lessons quite loosely in the early stages with the Primary group. The Dixon and Stratta papers had helped to give shape to the later narrative analysis, the form of which can be largely seen in Framework A.

In the framework which now follows some of the emphasis can be seen to have altered. The team's early categories are subsumed under various of the five sections. The importance of source material, especially in relation to whether the writing is personal or imaginative is now given greater weight. The shape and focus of the narrative is handled under (ii), the significance of the viewpoint and general consideration of the reader covered in (iii) and (iv), while sentence structure and all surface features are considered under point (v).

A: THE WRITTEN WORK - Framework for Analysis

i) Resources used in the setting or situation. How much is drawn form personal experience? i.e. Imaginative sources versus knowledge. Is there a successful merging of the two?
ii) Ordering, use of theme, time etc., focus, significance, complexity.
iii) Significance in the view point - if first or third person is used what kind of entry does that offer into the imaginative world? What perspectives are offered by the Narrator/author on participants or

events?
iv] Is there conscious or unconscious assumption of a reader acquainted with setting, characters or events? What level of demand is made on the reader?
v] Uses of language - surface features, paragraphing, vocabulary, direct speech. Phrase structure development and cohesion (this for a more in-depth examination of the later Year 8 texts).

There has been, in fairly recent studies of reading processes, much consideration of the importance of the various techniques employed in a text to ensure cohesion and coherence. Many of these devices - connectives, substitution and ellipsis - are necessary because the situational features of speech, that is the context and speakers present, together with body language, tone, intonation or inflection, are not present in writing but some of them can be in a cartoon.

It is difficult at this stage to say just what kinds of reference young writers may transfer or possibly invent for the visual story format. Often in comics actual, single verbal conjunctions are borrowed almost as a sub-text and of course signs, symbols and colour can all serve this same cohesive purpose. Both endorphic forms - anaphoric and cataphoric reference - do actually appear quite naturally either through frame order and organization as symbols (see for example *Six Feet Under*) and, though not cohesive, exophoric reference is used quite extensively in 'one-off' cartoons. Any joke emanating from contemporary happenings, political or social, and drawing on current knowledge, illustrates this point. Giles' jokes several years later often need explanation. However any creator of a visual narrative quickly learns the importance of clear endorphic

reference to create coherent text for her or his audience, especially for an audience of hypercritical peers.

When the texts are discussed in Chapters Seven, Eight and Nine, most or all of these factors are borne in mind and referred to when significant. I then took this template away and worked on a roughly comparable visual version for the next stage. The structure for the writing that we had developed only really covered a straight comparison of the texts as texts and a comparison of the methods the children used to achieve cohesion. Actually to be able to create a similar unity in a visual text does of course indicate that something important is happening at the level of overview, something to do with the levels of abstraction. Even at the very early stage at which many of the primary group were functioning, they were, in Flavell's terms, taking the 'message' as cognitive object and consciously operating on it, analysing it, or editing it. That is to say displaying differing degrees of awareness at a metaphoric level. There had then to be some additional categories to look for in the cartoons.

In dealing with the work samples the level of difficulty of presentation in the task ought to be a consideration, so a major component in the Visual Narrative Assessment was an attempt to measure the potential complexity of the differing kinds of illustration linked with the narratives. There was only minor adjustment to the first five points - all of it related to the pictorial

nature of the stories not the particular narrative focus.

B: ILLUSTRATION TO CARTOON - Framework for Analysis

i] **Resources** used in the setting or situation. How much is drawn from personal experience? Imaginative sources versus knowledge. Is there a successful merging of the two?*

ii] **Organising the story line** - ordering the pictures- how many frames?*

iii] **Significant viewpoint** - focussing on key figures or incidents. Often in all this, cartoons they have seen provide useful models.*

iv] **Demands made on the 'reader'** - the provision of cues to avoid ambiguity. For example causal connectives like "because" should not be necessary if the picture order is right. How is emotion indicated? (N.B. Comparison is very hard.)

v] **Uses of the language of pictures:** this will include symbolism to aid cohesion and coherence. E.g. an arrow can be a temporal and a directional conjunction substitute. It can refer backwards or forwards in the 'text'. That is to say it supplies anaphoric or cataphoric reference. Arrows or lines for example can also indicate speed and so on.

vi] A continuum of progression towards full cartoon form.

1] Narrative with one or two pictures illustrating a significant point in the story or an illustrated frieze/border with an obviously relevant symbol.
2] Narrative punctuated with a number of relevant drawings which add to the story line and/or description.
3] A series of related pictures establishing the context and/or showing action(s) and with accompanying verbal text.
4] Pictures carrying the main burden of the narrative but with occasional annotation or 'speech bubbles'.
5] Wholly illustrated cartoon - visual symbols alone tell the story.

*The first three stages, i - iii, here are aspects of picture narrative which are particularly helpful when wanting to teach children about literary conventions and how such things as plot and characterisation, together with more complex notions of time and order, can be made to work for the story teller.

Since one important objective was to examine how the condensed visual

narrative permitted an overview of narrative form, the way in which the purely written texts were treated in respect of shape, organization and consideration of the reader, needed replicating in the cartoon analysis. To do this it was essential to bear in mind the variety of presentations which a combination of writing and drawing might take, hence point vi) is a developed continuum of the 'picture' narrative . In each of the chapters on the empirical evidence, incorporated into the analysis itself and included (in bold - from i to vi) is an assessment of where each cartoon story stands.

Importantly each stage along the continuum can also be measured in respect of the ratio of drawing to written caption, while the last key consideration was a judgement of the interactive features displayed by each text. This was done using the accompanying scale C. This assessment too can be seen placed in brackets in bold print after the analysis of each piece of work.

The first draft of the interaction scale had five points but these were modified to three, since finer distinctions proved hard to justify in terms of levels of abstraction or difficulty.

C: Interaction

a] Straight representation from written text, therefore low level interaction or a selected icon/symbol abstracted from story. (The taking of simple motifs to represent the key to the whole story.)

b] Usual 'comic' format: classified according to the level of interdependence of the visual and verbal aspects of the text. Additional detail in the narrative embracing the use of colour to shape, enhance or link the two forms. General interchange of verbal and visual images.
c] Pictographic modes of expression: new ideas or concepts captured visually in original ways - in particular the visual equivalents of written forms expressing movement, pace or position - that is to say, the creation of a 'visual syntax'. With the increased level of interdependence, more difficult concepts are expressed - especially those related to narrative structure such as voice and focalization.

Issues arising:

In relation to the original tentative theories, Paivio's dual coding given the economy of the visual image has proved a very important concept moving away from a simplistic notion of just analytic and syncretistic thought modes as interactive components which, in Piaget's terms, allow decentring - important as this is. If the representational, the iconic level, is enabled to interact with the more verbal but less flexible abstract idea, that is to say the 'memorable' image and its associated concepts can be invoked, together with the abstractions behind them, then thinking is being encouraged at a metaphoric or metacognitive level.

That crucial notion of dual coding [5] presupposed that thinking works both through words and images. If that is so, and adults quite often facilitate their thinking using drawings or some form of graphic representation, then

there seems good reason to assume that children may also profit from it.

Moreover -

> "If writing can facilitate thinking about ideas and information coded verbally then it is plausible that drawing can facilitate thinking about ideas coded in images." [6]

The concept of metaphor as a learning device has also been looked at, at least in part, because it too has a visual component. All the devices Petrie listed, from metaphor to models, invite the learner to proceed from the familiar, from the rule governed, towards unfamiliar ground, allowing the learner to bridge the gap. We know that similes and comparison metaphors can help but the truly interactive metaphor goes further - it actually creates similarities.

One matter which meant that looking at these texts would be anything but straightforward, is the by now well documented fact that the developmental process in writing is not linear. Even over the course of a year, proof of direct progress was unlikely which immediately raises the spectre of validity once more. So despite the ever present worries concerning how advances in writing technique gained from this way of

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[5] Paivio 1971

[6] Thomas, G.V. and Silk, A.M.J., An Introduction to the Psychology of Children's Drawings, 158

working might be measured, the response of so many children to it over many years of teaching seemed too important to ignore.

The other problem which arose was just how to analyse and classify what they produced. The written part was relatively easy but the illustrations which emerged ranged from the patterned edges of a decorated page to full-blown cartoon attempts. In the end the framework used included a continuum which proceeded from simple symbol or representational drawing to a cartoon strip and assumed moreover, that a cartoon without words was more difficult than one with even minimal annotation. With the secondary group in the first phase, the thematic approach had been deliberately used to promote co-operative working and, knowing the students, we had expected some difficulties. Certainly they had much to learn socially but the younger children in the Primary sector struggled even more to provide a coherent plan when they put themselves into small groups. It would seem that at least some of the difficulty was concerned with maturation.

One other finding which emerged in the final stages was that on visiting the samples yet again there seemed to be evidence of progress in a number of them, especially in the secondary sector (stage 3) which relates to Section C in the interaction sphere - progress concerning

metacognition, the understanding of narrative as a whole, its presentation, narrative voice and the use of such techniques as 'visual ellipsis'.

From this final gathering of empirical data the fact that Andrew C. had done so little by comparison with almost all of the rest, when he was actually quite bright, seemed strange. I had interpreted his response as lack of interest but it began to look rather more like an inability to visualize. He did what was asked of him as far as he could, under silent protest, but he did not seem to have the ability to internalise visually and then try to produce a narrative offering as the others d id. It was not just that he could not draw, for that matter neither could Esther or Hazel or Sally from the Primary group.

The ability to do this is an area worthy of much greater investigation. We already have an ever increasing body of evidence from different disciplines which insist on the importance of visual education and in particular the concept of graphicacy. If Balchin and Coleman are right about the need for graphic understanding for certain modes of verbal thought to develop - the more imaginative aspects, the metacognitive levels, then children who have difficulties in this area may be struggling also where other forms of visual presentation are used. They may be suffering in a number of areas across the curriculum wherever the verbal and visual modes need to interact.

In the last, more deliberately structured phase however, the level of teacher guidance which should have been achieved was seriously curtailed by pressure of time. It is a matter of lasting regret that the enthusiastic response and fascinating cartoons that the group produced were not then discussed and used as a basis for further written work. I suspect the unrealised potential here was enormous. Since this work began there have been rapid strides made in the computing and reprographic worlds. This has now made it a practical proposition, in the better equipped schools, to duplicate samples of children's work in sufficient numbers so that it is possible to talk in detail about their own illustrative offerings with the whole class.

A Question of Reliability:

"Early research findings in any area of enquiry are likely to be qualitative in form."[7] ... said Dr Marshall. What he does not say but Rene Saran, immersed in qualitative research methods does, is that the whole undertaking is, at times unbelievably messy and "Whilst involved in the process, one is often only dimly aware of the methods employed."[8] However multiple case sampling will add to confidence in the findings and "By looking at a range of similar and contrasting cases, we can

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[7] Marshall, P., Research Methods, 28

understand a single-case finding ..... we are following a replication strategy." [9] In this particular enquiry there have been three schools involved, the age range of children has been cross-phase, nine to thirteen, with a total of sixty cartoon and written scripts.[10]

As far as possible I had tried to bear in mind Louis M. Smith's recommendations with regard to the design of the experiment, namely that

> The selection of cases for investigation must provide variation of the theoretical variable(s) and at least partial control of relevant extraneous variables.

The plan then was to place one action researcher (myself) in a variety of situations, accepting that inevitably my presence would affect what was being examined, since educational research can never be clinically experimental. The thought that neither what I did, nor the class, might be generally replicable, since what followed would be the interaction of an individual, not to say idiosyncratic approach, by one teacher with a variety of classes, was always a concern. Nonetheless the ethnographic method of research has some distinct advantages. It can minimise reactivity, or the effect of the observer on what s/he is studying.....

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[8] Burgess, R.G., Strategies of Educational Research, (1984, p.208)

[9] Miles and Huberman (1994, p.29)

> more easily than surveys (by an unobtrusive observer) and it is well suited to interpreting the significance of human behaviour which may be hidden because human actors do not always realise the implicit content of their interactions, which require interpretation. The meaning of much social interaction is context dependent and tacit.[11]

I set out therefore to create and record a series of lessons with respect to visual and verbal narrative which would in the first place play to what I hoped were my two main strengths, namely classroom delivery and investigative analysis of the resulting work. The use of humour, often on the same level as that of my recalcitrant charges, and the ability to draw, have proved times without number to be secret weapons in the cause of discipline. Put more simply, if your class is working with you, you do not need disciplinary tactics, but, and it is a big but, other teachers achieve perfectly satisfactory relations with their classes using very different methods. It was necessary therefore to see that the lesson content stood up to scrutiny and held interest because of its intrinsic nature, recording accurately the method of delivery.

None of the circumstances in the lessons, in the gathering of the data, could be replicated exactly in this or any other experimental classroom process but I, as the teacher, was constant throughout and the methods used could be repeated. Since what the children did was done as part of

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[10] 38 cartoon (at varying points on the continuum) & 19 wholly written texts

the normal lesson plan the whole project was in no way artificial and not subject to 'a test effect'. The texts and data gathered can be objectively assessed; the guide to the children's approach to narrative form was collectively agreed by the team and the analysis of the language of the texts using Halliday and Hasan and also Katherine Perera gives an objective view of the structure of the written texts. Provided that the visual 'grammar' is taken as read, that is to say that the equivalence accepted with linguistic forms, that too is much more than a subjective interpretation. In order to ensure rigour the frameworks were devised but they were used more as a guide to indicate or note points either common to whole data or of general interest, or on occasion where there was something notable or individual in a particular response.

Once the analysis for the written texts had been fully prepared, the next task was to modify the investigative framework to cope with the cartoons on as equal a footing with their writing as possible. A continuum of progression was devised to show how far children made use of complete or partial cartoon forms because there was considerable variation in what they chose. And yet another problem became apparent at this juncture - how to rate the level of exchange between the visual and verbal elements of the texts. This measure of interaction between the two modalities demanded much thought and revision. The final version

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[11] Hammersly, M. and Atkinson, P. Ethnography: Principles in Practice

consisted of three broad categories, with each representing an advance in terms of visual narrative technique. An earlier, more detailed list entailed having to differentiate between levels of abstraction with the virtual impossibility of deciding how to order them to demonstrate increasing degrees of difficulty.

It ought to be noted that the sudden resort to 'inter-rater reliability'[12] using the teacher group, which occurred in the initial setting up and analysis of the work with this last experiment, was not a panic attempt to achieve spurious 'scientific' credentials. It came about because my original intention had been to conduct a much lengthier series of lessons and, having assessed the early texts fairly objectively, to see whether any obvious improvements might be detected. Sadly, because of the extended access to the class which would have been required, that did not happen.

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[12] Ely, M., Qualitative Research, (1991, p.164)

CHAPTER SEVEN

Reading the texts, both written and drawn.

Introduction:

After the analysis of the early secondary cartoons, the first school involved in the experimental work was at Junior level, in an area of some considerable ethnic diversity, in north Birmingham. The year six group would, if Gardner were right, be in the midst of their 'literal' phase but it was necessary to take advantage of a generous offer to let me loose in a primary phase classroom. I had a whole afternoon a week for a term and, since it was just before the advent of our National Curriculum, a free hand to do what I wanted. The class teacher was in charge of science throughout the school and glad of assistance in English and the Arts.

There were two specific areas to be concentrated on - narrative and illustration. In both it was important to know where the pupils were or how much they already knew. Since, with such a large number to teach, I did not anticipate managing to achieve a full programme of cartoon narrative, I wished instead to work with the illustrative side. I wanted to show them how to use and enjoy pictures without having to have a great ability to draw.

Their knowledge of stories and how they operate was in most instances already quite well developed and some of our time was spent revisiting ones we both knew and sharing what we liked. In terms of narrative structure we looked at kinds of story, or genre and beginnings and endings. We explored characters and stereotypes; we looked at the possibility of autobiography, attempted oral story telling and putting stories on tape. The latter was both for the record and to encourage listening to others. With the pictures we tried to have fun and create relevant illustrations in whatever manner we could, using cut-outs from magazines, tracings, copies, anything just so long as it enhanced the written text.

This chapter describes therefore the first stage of exploration of the role of drawing and visual contributions in the classroom. The work took place in a happy, noisy, multi-ethnic, mixed-ability Junior class. No attempt is made to impose an 'experimental' pattern on what happens but it is a deliberate effort using a course in narrative, design and illustration, to see what the interactive effects are and what might be the most effective way to direct the empirical work in this study.

The theoretical chapters cited the slowly increasing numbers of educationists and researchers whose thinking supports the importance of paying proper attention to the visual aspect of thought. People like Bartlett, Arnheim, Iser, Slobin and Goodnow all lend credence to the common sense strategies of Valerie Walkerdine. She presents us with

classroom examples of moves from the concrete, visualisable concept to the independent, abstract symbol. It was on this type of approach that I wanted to build.

When the time came to analyse the Primary work I used the framework developed collaboratively for the secondary texts (see the previous chapter). I wanted to have some of the most compelling aspects of *Six Feet Under* replicated in the classroom in a more deliberate fashion. The first was the intriguing use and development of borrowed cartoon symbols into a 'visual syntax' by the young authors. Its potential as a teaching tool struck me as considerable. The whole grammatical scene might benefit from it - after all they were unconsciously making use of as complex a process as ellipsis. Could they be helped to see the comparison between this sophisticated visual usage and their own written work? All in all this cartoon seemed to have its own approach to visual metaphor (more often than not a wholly tacit one) and a strong sense of the working of visual symbolism.

In the first instance at this stage of the research the concern was with narrative content, grammatical development and, in particular, cohesion. As regards the visual aspect, initially I made the assumption that children would move from purely representational illustrations on a continuum towards a fully autonomous cartoon story without any verbal addition. (In actual fact this rarely happened. More usually the children experimented

with the visual forms but made significant use of written annotations with only the very occasional foray into solely visual presentation. (This was true across the ability range.) In the end it was the interaction between the two media which seemed to be an important measure of the increase in metacognitive awareness and also of the level of presentational difficulty in a situation where children already have many of the skills of literacy and where telling a story in visual images only was not a normal requirement of the curriculum. (see p170-172.)

The lessons try to redress the normal imbalance which exists against the visual aspect of classroom tasks without forcing any child to illustrate or draw against his or her will. The underlying assumption is that not everybody will find this approach helpful. Analysis of the subsequent texts, with the intriguing aural redrafting which one or two offered, was a salutary reminder that the other senses ought not to be ignored either.

It is important to stress at this point that the main purpose of this first enterprise (building on what had emerged from the secondary work which resulted in *Six Feet Under*) was to explore the use and understanding of symbols with these pupils and also to discover the part that art and illustration played in the classroom. If this age range were to prove to be truly a non-metaphoric or literal stage how much intervention might be needed?

The following examples are taken from work done during the delivery of a series of lessons in a multi-ethnic primary classroom where children, Year 6, were being invited to explore narrative in conjunction with visual illustration and cartoon drawing in various ways. In the event, because of the wide ability range, a considerable input was actually needed and some time was also given to responding to the 'English' needs of the class teacher. For these reasons it took a long time to reach the stage of creating cartoon versions and only a few of the children achieved them. Quite a number however, began designing very simple pictures to symbolise the main content or theme of their tales. Hats and broomsticks represented witches and the occult, while pineapples, musical items, guns, boxer shorts and even aspirin bottles were among the relevant tokens that they did produce. The work spanned a complete term. What follows here is a brief résumé to set it in context. In the initial stages the children were told a story (orally) and the various ways it might have ended were the focus. Attention then turned to the different kinds of beginnings which might start a narrative and what we collectively knew about how stories work. *The Practical Princess* is always a good way of frustrating expectations and making pupils think in this respect. [1]

At this point it was becoming obvious that though the usual staffroom mythology persisted, namely that today's child only responds to the kind of

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[1] Williams, J., The Practical Princess and Other Liberating Fairy Tales

gratuitous horror and violence so pervasive in the media, there was an immense fund of stories from the past which even the least able in this very mixed ability class had remembered, or half-remembered. It was also clear that the idea that it was possible to put as much work into illustration as one might into telling a story came as a surprise to them all.

I haven't a complete list of all the tales they referred to during the course of the term but the variety was tremendous. Their own stories even when about adventure, 'cops and robbers' or horror had very little verisimilitude when it came to violence. Though they loved *A Game of Life and Death* with death and the dying in every other paragraph, their own work in reply seemed even further divorced from reality.[2] This might be, it is true, because they lacked mimetic skill, however tales about personal relationships and putative classroom romances suggested otherwise.

In the midst of Divali preparations, cut-out pictures, sausage-man drawings, Rosen poems with fluff under the bed, palm trees, lions and pigs, small groups were trying to tell stories to a tape recorder in the corner. It was, I hope, organized chaos going somewhere.

Planning a picture story at the tender age of ten or eleven is quite hard and for many the actual physical division of the page proved a problem

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[2] Jackson, A., A Game of Life and Death

so breaking up the paper into discrete units was quite often done simply by folding it.

One important barrier to break down is the notion that only people who can draw well can succeed in creating picture stories or producing a telling illustration. Together we worked for sometime exploring stick cartoons, composite sausage figures, cut-out designs, ways of bordering and edging, the importance of presentation - often just ensuring that colour was applied evenly made an enormous difference - and most children need help to see how to create something which will look good from a distance. I well remember some of my own cherished line work which faded into miserable insignificance when displayed. What follow are examples of some of the work which emerged during the course of that term. Wherever possible the particular context will be noted. However this will not always be easy because every child worked at his or her own pace and in addition completed or even at times started work during the remainder of the week when I was not there.

Year Six:	Scripts and Cartoons	
		3
Vanita, Nicole and Nuzhat	School Performance	3b
Rupinder	When the man killed his brother...	-
Rupinder and Nuzhat	Marsh Mellow Country	4b
Vanita	The Horrible Witch	1a
Nuzhat	Long ago there lived.... (Witch)	1a
Shelley	About when I eat a pineapple	1a
Sally	A lesson to learn	-

Tamarah	When I was six months old	-
Shelley and Sally	Love and Romance	2a
Sukhinder and Dominic and	A Story About Romance/Love	2a
Davinderjit, and Adio	A story about Love and Romance	2a
Fiaz	An autobiography of me	1a
Fiaz	The Friendly Ghost	2b
Surjit	Ghosts - the written tale	1a
Surjit	The Ghost Buster cartoon	5a
Anon	Ghost Busters	3a
Davinderjit	Myself	1a
Davinderjit and Frederick	Quarter Backs 1	4a
	Quarter Backs 11	
	Quarter Backs 111	
Anon	Genesis	-

The Scripts:

School Performance - Vanita, Nicole and Nuzhat

The first story I want to look at, *School Performance,* is a joint effort by three girls. It was consequent upon some brief autobiographical sketches where it was suggested that incidents which at the time had seemed disastrous, made wonderful material when viewed in retrospect. It seemed important to establish the principle that for some kinds of story-telling it is possible to use straight recollection or to take real happenings and weld them into an invented tale of one's own. The source material is drawn almost entirely from their own experience.

This particular, multi-ethnic school with its cultural mix clearly reflected through its wall displays and the ethnic mix of its staff [teaching and non-teaching]. With many of the parents happily in evidence, it might well have been involved in just such an enterprise as that which the pupils describe in their story.

The lonely, abused 'hero', reflecting the darker side of life, may have been an echo of something they knew of or may of course have been media inspired.

The illustrated version begins calmly enough with an absolutely verbatim quote from the original, the accompanying text - even the spelling mistakes are retained. The story within a story is kept too, as is the third person narrative but a little coherence is lost. We do need the written version to make all totally clear, especially as the frame order is not very strong because of the way they have divided up the page. This in combination with their partial completion of pages two and three suggests a rather weak overview of the subsequent cartoon when they reworked their story. Despite all this there is good evidence of interaction with the visual rendering lending detail and credence to the written form.

The Head is, undoubtedly based on a real life figure and captured as much by the picture as by the words. Were there any dispute as to his origin the drawing showing a cardigan under his jacket when .. "he done

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the tango", together with the comment that he was "overexited", renders it groundless. He has a host of educational activities throughout the city and a seemingly inexhaustible supply of energy so that you feel that he knows each individual in his school and they him.

There is a definite response to the visual image here; it inspires the additional material in the captions below. The Head's delight, excited behaviour and mild eccentricity are not explored until the youngsters work on the illustrated version. The written piece was done first and the writers then prepared the visual version. However it should be borne in mind that none of the picture stories we shall look at was done 'cold'. Hopefully all pupils were immersed in a context which 'made it okay' to draw as well as write and, perhaps more important, not to draw, if they did not want to.

What this story begins to reveal is that the process of re-drafting the content can be done through the instigation of the visual version and not because the teacher has told them what to do. This happens at all ability levels and since nothing breeds success like success, the process offers a wonderful tool for developing writing.

None of these girls displays the artistic talent we shall see from some of the boys but they achieve interesting effects; the sea of faces in the assembly for example, neatly side steps the need to draw well and also suggests

that like many youngsters they have taken part in assemblies from the non-sleeping angle!

Frame 3 has a précis of the information in the written version accomplished by the adjective "exciting" now attached not to the head or the children, but to the news. Quite an advanced switch. Through the drawings which, regrettably, were never finished, we get an enhanced picture of the emotions as for example, in the illustration of Gary's house where a partially erased Gary and friend were to have been; the authors add that "he even started to sob before he got home."

The picture version was split amongst the three of them which accounts for some of the differences in style and the written text too was very largely a joint effort though the handwriting is Vanita's. At this stage there are still some obvious omissions and there is evidence of missed cohesion in the written version; see for example line 18 where the 'he' appears to belong to the friend but quite clearly does not.

When we recorded some of the tales they had written on tape there were slight differences from the originals. Sometimes these changes were slips of the tongue, but just occasionally there were genuine examples of the children editing out loud as they went along. When *School Performance* gets to line 15 the reader 'edits' in a full stop following "matter" and alters "each" to every - a definite improvement in that context. Later too, on line

35, the reader tries to insert an "it" and recognises that this will necessitate a change of tense, so changes "sort" to "sorted". However this 'on the hoof' drafting is a very difficult art, one which to my surprise, one of the children managed extremely successfully later in the session.

In terms of their narrative structure, these three girls score quite highly. The opening is set in familiar surroundings and then in a very sophisticated move they tell a story within a story. The realism in respect of the child abuse is helped by their awareness that PE and swimming were likely to be the lessons when bruises might arouse teacher suspicion.

When we arrive at the dénouement the school receives £5000 and an academy award but the pupils all get sixty pounds each! Even the inflation is realistically managed - ten would have been enough when I was at school. The modesty of the reward indicates a growing maturity. The concluding statement falls rather flat after that but it *does* make a coda with strong links with the beginning.

On first inspection this story seems to rate only as a level 2 on the continuum, narrative punctuated with relevant drawings -especially as much of it relies on the initial written version - but the illustrated section had its drawings established first and the writing was then placed around the figures. Thus the wording changes and particularly in the case of the Head where the portrait they drew then merited additional detail in the written

commentary. In the end it seemed fairer to award this part 3 with an interactive factor of (b).

One of the two co-authors of the next cartoon story is Rupinder. Looking at a piece she produced later in the term, a re-telling of an adventure which encompassed an element of the fantastic in it, she is still at an early stage of writing development but there is a little evidence that she can go beyond the simplest of conjunctive devices.

When the man killed his brother -Rupinder

The first sentence -"When the man killed his brother he decided to kill his wife." - for example, has an adverb clause of time preceding the subject pronoun. However to reverse it, to change the order in which she had heard it, she would have needed to use the primary auxiliary in its perfective aspect - 'had'. This is a construction which has not appeared in any of her written work as yet and moreover she has difficulties with tense anyway. See line 13 - .... "the others mans face was get white."... and "When the game end he told his friend to go home." Later (line 9), she comes up with a nominal clause as object: "He did not now that his friend was a expert at chest."

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Marsh Mellow Country - Rupinder and Nuzhat

When Rupinder and Nuzhat join forces, the narrative text does not show an advance on a syntactical level but there are generally fewer errors as they proof read each other's writing. Using their second, illustrated version it would quite quickly be possible to remedy problems with inverted commas and even to begin to show the workings of paragraphs.

In the second picture story, an imaginative piece *Marsh Mellow Country*, Nuzhat, who obviously likes working in a group, and Rupinder collaborate to write a very different tale.

Though these two can write reasonably they do not, either of them, achieve the level of sentence complexity recorded in the work of the earlier triumvirate. In effect we are treated almost to a list of events recorded in a string of clauses and the repetition of a number of key words reveals a lack of readily available pronouns, similes or phrases:-

> One day a girl went to the marsh mellow country. When the girl went She was about to step on a marsh mellow

This story has a very limp finale probably penned by Nuzhat -

There were onlly 10 marsh mellows left.

And that was the end of the marsh mellow country

Nonetheless her file of work indicates that she has some untapped potential and it is she who continues the tale in the cartoon version. At first in this piece the written draft as plan is adhered to but then that thread is developed further in the picture version. As is obvious from the change of style on page two, they shared the drawings. There is clearly interaction between the text and the illustrations, especially perhaps in frame 3 where additional written text elaborates the joke.

Placed on the continuum at level 4(b), the story line is written at the top of the frames with some additional speech, usually drawn straight from the written text but not always. The marsh mellows address the reader straight from the first frame; the second frame has a symbolic handshake representing kindness and friendship (we had explored symbols as a group, so this was consciously done), with the sun and a green tree symbolising the warmth of the marsh mellow land and lastly, in the writing, we are told about the two marsh mellows rehearsing a very old joke, a feature which is developed in the illustrated re-telling of the story.

To complete and improve this it would be possible first to look at how the end might be shown visually and then perhaps to change the written version. Such exchange between the two kinds of draft does work.

In fact as *School Performance* reveals, only a very little conscious teaching is needed to start children on the redrafting of the content in this way.

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Children can quickly be shown the symbolical and metaphorical notions within cartoons, 'soaps' and dramatic productions of various kinds.

As has so often been pointed out, youngsters *know* about 'things' which stand for other things, they learn the possibilities of all that in their imaginative play. If a broom or stick can be a horse, then a witch can readily personify evil or the sun happiness. Encouraged to play with these sorts of idea, writing begins to change and even develop; nor need the process begin and end with narrative.

In order to have some understanding of the respective writing abilities at which the authors of these tales operated, I have examined texts that were worked on singly by each of them. As a rule, when given the choice, they seem to choose partners who had reached a roughly equivalent level.

The Horrible Witch - Vanita

Vanita's *The Horrible Witch* followed a class brainstorm on stories they had remembered and enjoyed. Stereo-typing and symbolism had been discussed but not in the sense that bad characters could stand for a more general or universal concept of evil, more in the sense that everyone

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knows what a witch looks like or that certain features are a shorthand for 'witch'. There was much more we could have explored but at the time I did not want the narrative aspect to get too far ahead of the illustrative part (and in this latter they had a great deal of basic work to do). The pictures at this stage were to provide a visual and decorative beginning. As well as her page of chosen objects to be cut out and used for wall decoration later, Vanita had added a series of symbols in the left hand margin of her text.

There is not much design sense in evidence here yet but she has developed the basic list of 'witch' items to include a wand, a black cloak, a black cat and rotten teeth, together with a bucket and sink, time-old symbols of household drudgery from the Cinderella story which is so obviously one of her sources. The frieze and the two pictures, a house and the witch with Cinders, put this work on a basic 1(a) on the continuum. In general it seems fair to say that almost everyone began to think about balance, proportion and perspective in a rather different way once an end of term display became the objective.

This third person, largely imaginative, narration has lovely touches of realism, as when the witch is nonplussed by Cinderella's request for her name and she comes up with the rather banal "Penny". The writing is neat and legible but with never a paragraph in sight. The clauses, however, prove occasionally to be quite advanced constructions.

The witch, like all witches, a rather unpleasant piece of work, is waiting to try to collar some unsuspecting innocent to char for her on a permanent and unpaid basis and (a) "... looked out of the windows to see if anyone was passing by." And then (b) "She had sat there for an hour but no-one passed by." There is correct use both of the auxiliaries and an infinitive construction, which after (c) "she was fed up of clean up", comes as a nice surprise.

Her writing reveals a number of what Cripps would call 'good' bad spellings, that is to say spelling errors with a fairly obvious logic behind them and there are also some local dialectal features in her sentences with both kinds of 'error' present in greater frequency towards the end.[3] Either she is getting tired or the narrative has assumed primacy over her attempts to achieve a 'correct' version or both. She has written nearly two sides of A4, with reasonably varied phrasing, a good sprinkling of dialogue (not always marked) and with passages of forceful, visual clarity on occasion. Take for example the slightly flustered old crone hastily making up a name; the reddening face of the frightened, stammering girl who ... "had used to work for someone but had got sacked" - a nice little touch - as was the next one when the witch needed to get "her breath back.." So 1(a) since Vanita's 'pictures' are very much more within her prose.

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[3] Cripps, C., (Cox Report team - Cambridge Inst. Of Ed.)

Long Ago There Lived.... - Nuzhat

One of her co-authors in the earlier "School Performance", was Nuzhat, working co-operatively in both picture stories so far examined. She too experimented with witch related-objects and their stories are similar but not identical. At least one of her sources was Hansel and Gretel and she is bursting with ideas. This time although beauty and, presumably, virtue triumph the witch very definitely survives to plot another day. The end is not quite the end. Again this is a relatively immature piece of writing. The connectives are usually 'and', 'so' or 'that'. Though basic, the co-ordination is normally not reversible perhaps because however simple the verbal structure, the narrative is strong and pulls the story along. Who could resist the image of the eyes going round or rather "rowned and rowned"?

The story had opened with a traditional fairy tale beginning, with a dependent comparative clause on lines 2 and 3 but with no evidence of substitution or ellipsis except for the accidental omission on line 4 of a noun to go with "a dertie" —. It comprised just a series of mostly compound sentences with adverbial clauses of time, reason and the odd adverbial phrase:- "This time she got a wand and done a magic spell on the wand." As with Vanita there is some evidence of the local dialect. She achieves a fairly complex construction on lines 20/21 and if we take the sentence as beginning at "when" and finishing at "to do" there is a basic ASVA type with a comparative clause forming the second adverbial.

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The drawings around the margin follow the same formula as *The Horrible Witch*, the apple motif occurring twice probably indicating its central role in the story while the main illustration uses the witch with rather evil looking green hands and face, her familiar and a large red apple as symbols for the main narrative theme. Again the piece only merits 1 for its illustrative progress.

Both girls approach spelling phonetically when unsure and, unfortunately for them, when they work collaboratively have problems with the same sorts of words, as witness "discised" [disguised] and "dicieded", both of which seem to me, all things being equal, to be eminently reasonable attempts whereas the generally more 'correct' Vanita can only manage "and deiced to look out for someone" [decided].

About when I eat the pineapple - Shelley

Shelley quite often works in collaboration with Sally and although not as advanced linguistically, still has much to add as a brief examination of *When I eat a pineapple* will show.

The problem which arises in the title looks as though it might be one of tense but is more, I suspect, to do with pronunciation. What gives this away is the recording made subsequently where she says quite audibly /e/t not /ei/t and she is reading "eat" from her own text. The issue is probably therefore one of dialect and phonology.

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By comparison with Tamarah, whose work we shall see a little later on, her writing is neat which always gives a favourable impression but actually while the spelling is marginally more accurate she hasn't progressed much further. (1a)

Like Tamarah, she too makes changes in her text as she reads aloud. For Shelley the border illustration is strong patterning and colour, and the wording of her central image is incorporated as part of it. Her written images are strong, presenting a lively almost physical description of a youthful gorging on ripe fruit - a child's vivid remembrance. Our joint exploration of memories, "...the moment[s] in and out of time," had clearly touched a nerve but the response was often (not always) more detailed and specific from the girls than the boys.

A Lesson to Learn -Sally

Sally's autobiographical piece of writing, *A lesson to learn,* is of a very different order of maturity compared with the others. This and its very visual imagery are the main reasons for its inclusion here. It also helps to indicate the spread of writing achievement in the class. The very first sentence has two adverbial phrases preceding and modifying the verb in the main clause. This is immediately followed by..... "Mrs Wain the other nursery teacher was on playground duty that day." with its example of an appositive noun phrase as subject, the kind of expansion one would expect to see beginning to happen at about ten years of age and an indicator of a writer's increasing maturity.

Within this text of forty-five lines there is a fair spread of sentence patterns showing flexibility. Among the indicators of increasing skill are to be found such features as the number of adverbial clauses and the inversion of the usual word order to achieve emphasis, as in -

> The time came when it was time to go inside, Mrs Wain called everyone in but as I was hidden round the corner I couldn't hear that we had to go in.

Granted it could be said that the first comma ought to have been a full stop and elision or substitution would have removed the first adverbial clause and dealt with the final preposition. However, a less sensitive writer might well have begun with 'When it was time to go inside...' and Sally's format is that of the story teller; perhaps of the oral tradition moving towards the written?

Line 20 offers another interesting inversion. A relatively complex phrase precedes the main clause which is then followed by the adverb clause of result containing within its structure another of condition:-

> About half way up the doors was a piece of glass so (if you were tall enough) people would be able to see you.

Sally is clearly quite happy with long, complex statements even if the 'buts', 'but as', and 'but ifs' proliferate from time to time. She is also making effective use of the occasional terse main clause, as in (line 27) "Time went by." and again in the well judged economy of (line34) "Outside I thought I would have another go at trying to get people's attention." Only the

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single adverb here, not a phrase as we have come to expect, with the starkness of it reflecting the cold and solitary nature of her situation. The unconscious touch of a sensitive writer.

She does not however, take her reader quite far enough into the past and give her tense the perfect progressive - 'just have been able' and instead reverts to almost an oral technique addressing the reader.

> "But if I stood on my tip toes you would just be able to see the tips of my fingers."

There is also considerable skill demonstrated in the ending. The passage beginning .... "My mum....", which should have been marked as the final paragraph, may contain a miswriting of the phrase 'with open arms' but the use of the participle "opening", intentional or not, lends a sense of extension and protection as the mother embraces her. I like too the repetition of "slowly" in the final sentence thereby reintroducing the initial phrase and slowing the textual pace.

When I was six months old... - Tamarah

In passing it may be worth looking at the work of one youngster who showed very little interest in drawing or response to visual cues. When she produced any illustrative work at all it was of a very basic nature and more as a patterning around the edges of her written text. What she did seem to possess however, was a retentive aural memory at any rate in

respect of short term recollection. I discovered this by chance when Tamarah came to read a creditably long piece on an early childhood incident to the tape recorder. Compared with many in the group, and certainly with most of the boys, she offers quite a detailed passage. She brought out "When i was 6 months old" and sat beside me while Dwayne operated the machine for us all. The text was clearly visible over her shoulder and the 'in situ' redrafting was very obvious.

To be able to improve the fluency and cohesion of her story in this way showed a presence of mind and competence which would not have been revealed from the written story alone. There are, for example no marked paragraphs; the punctuation is shaky; inverted commas have not been invented and the spelling at times is poised halfway between a phonetic and a visual approach- as in "lagfing".

With reference to some of her other work there emerges a distinct impression of local dialectal patterns carried into her writing but giving a lively expression to her use of direct speech (unmarked). This latter feature partially accounts for her oral redrafting of the written phrase - "...started to worrie were i was." - since in the tape version after a long pause she changed this to "where is she?" despite the former having been perfectly satisfactory in context. [line14]

Tamarah read much more confidently and fluently than I had anticipated from her earlier work. She began by recognising the redundant nature of the second "of the cot" and so omitted it, as she did the equally tautological "to get my hair apart" (line 20/1). She also realised there was a similar difficulty with the adverbial clause starting the next sentence, and reading "strings" was able to correct that, but then to insert 'I' which would have made simple sense, under the pressure of tape recording, was a bit much to ask. Nonetheless she knew that having begun with a dependent clause meant that she required some kind of ending so she plunged in with an instantly invented "I did not let them." The final sentence from line 28 on was left out; she knew intuitively that unless she was prepared to develop it further it was not relevant to the snapshot she had presented.

Looking again at the story with hindsight, although repetition spoils the flow, she begins with a dependent not a main clause; there are hints of something better and the tale is packed with incident.

What she does do though, through her tape editing, is to show that even if she has not progressed very far yet she is beginning to hear the language of narrative and adjust her own work in its light. Pictures, patterns or images may not affect her writing very much but the sound of words does. It is a different manner in which she 'perceives' and 'sees' what must be changed. The way forward for her could possibly be through greater use

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of the tape recorder. For the next example of illustrated pieces it is possible to identify the work of several individuals including Shelley, Sally, Sukhinder and Davinderjit. Having considered the various genres at some length, a group of boys and girls chose to write a love story mixing realism with a deal of pubescent imagination.

Love and Romance - Sally and Shelley

Sally, despite [or because of] her writing abilities, was fairly reticent orally but was often a major 'behind-the-scenes' influence. She and Shelley began the process with *Love and Romance* but it is clear that Sally took charge. There is a sense of tension between the title and all but the last line of the tale. There was a deliberate intention to tease and gently incite protest from others in the group, as witness line 20 where "big ring" is altered to "big kiss". The process of selection for the characters involved is the lottery of the blind date. Then they daringly add the slightly smutty "including the boys toilets", while slipped in just before their final concession to the title, is the sharply realistic "after many raos (rows)..."

Having turned their effort into a personal account and named various members of the class, the illustrated text looks as though it assumes cartoon format but actually the written text carries all the narrative weight and the pictures are a passive record in all three of the 'love' stories - so none achieves more than 2a. There is very little interaction. The title line has the anticipated pink hearts, the door adds their teacher's name and

subject and the final line is a summary of what occurs in detail in the first half. All the items drawn represent particular aspects, even the boys and girls are stereotypes.

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The Boys' Work:

A Story about Romance/Love - Sukhinder, Davinderjit et al

The next two stories are in the same vein and are mostly composed by Sukhinder and Davinderjit probably assisted by Dominic and Adio. They began with an agreed written text and the cartoon versions are also pretty similar. Sukhinder tends to have a rather literal approach. He offers the four agreed frames. In one and two the boy and girl demurely hold hands but by frame three this has become an embrace until frame four shows, probably unintentionally, a rigid and frightened bridegroom beside the bride. Sukhinder then adds "and had kids" - his only real addition to the original text. The pictures are enhanced with speech bubbles as well as the narrative footings but again this is level 2(a) and a not very inspiring retelling.

Romance & Love Story - Davinderjit

In the second story based on their agreed formula Davinderjit begins to develop the images. The couple as before, are drawn in the four frames, but now they more obviously represent stages in their relationship. In frame two, there is a move away from the conformist clothing in the early years and the girl's bare midriff is their agreed convention for adolescent rebellion.(You can see it in story 1.) Davinderjit has also added purple earrings, a necklace and some kind of headband, while the boy has a proprietorial arm around his girl.

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As in life though, kicking over the traces tends not to last and by the fourth frame the wedding 'uniform' is much in evidence and I do not think we should read too much into the yellow wedding dress that both cartoons show. In this second effort there is slight interaction between the text and the picture (frame three) in that the question posed is answered by the speech bubble but this may be because Davinderjit ran out of space. There is though evidence of some questioning of the dénouement, as witness the exclamation marks following "They got Married!!!!". It is interesting too that he sees "grew-up" as a compound word and gives it a hyphen. Does he see marriage as an inevitable concomitant I wonder? (2a)

Visually the stories are pretty uninspiring, very simplistic and are playing to the emerging awareness of boy-girl relationships written with much accompanying hilarity and some very questionable innocence.

An Autobiography of Me - Fiaz

Fiaz was one of two or three of the boys to respond positively to the idea of the autobiographical sketch. Born in Birmingham, his only real experience of 'snakes' was of the metaphorical kind, so his visit to Pakistan where curiosity had overcome caution, was exciting and memorable. This is probably the reason he reverts to an inter-language with so many more errors relating to tense which hadn't emerged in his earlier piece on *The Friendly Ghost*. It was real, it happened when he was abroad, he had

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been afraid and he had to get it down. To be sure one would need to know more and perhaps especially about the language(s) of his home but it appears that though the writing, the actual letter formation, and his efforts at punctuation show equal care in both cases, his success with tense formation goes backwards even to the extent of over-extension in line 15. The illustration is reduced to a border pattern and with perhaps the exception of the 'toy' snake for emphasis under the title, there is no symbolic interaction. (1a)

A second language learner, he exhibits tense problems, often through 'swallowed' endings as one would expect and he has difficulty where distinctions are not made clear in speech (where/were). I think it was the introduction of *The Shriek* which brought about the factor of Munch-like ghosts in a number of their scripts. Fiaz is trying very hard in this earlier effort about a ghost.

The Friendly Ghost - Fiaz

He uses colour imaginatively so that he creates an abstract and a coda for his text with his green and yellow title reflected in the glowing, lighted windows of the house with a green door. The illustrations seem to place the story at about level 2(a) but there is a different kind of interaction happening in the way in which they complete the shape of his narrative so that ultimately the interaction factor is quite high perhaps (b)?

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The drawing work of quite a large proportion of the boys in this year group was essentially a learned format from comics and the cartoon world. If we remember the history that Gombrich tells us about the struggle for mimesis, "that the artist represents what he can", the knowing as distinct from (if we can ever make the distinction) the seeing, then they are gathering one kind of schema with which to work. The difficulty with the 'simple' cartoon form is that you can end up with a sort of visual Enid Blyton; it is easy on the eye, makes a quick point in a readily accessible way and there may no great inclination, whatever its in-built virtues to progress further, particularly if the skills of draughtsmanship of the author are not very great. These pupils have evolved though, a kind of imaginal language in which to describe the visual world but I suspect it constrains the type of story they tell.

Most of the girls start the other way round where the danger is that, not having sufficient artistry to come at all close to the accurate representation they would like, disillusion sets in to the extent that the interface between the two versions does not happen. This places the emphasis firmly back on the importance of creating the right ethos in the classroom. To draw or not to draw? Initially there was no intention to analyse the work of the boys separately from that of the girls but the scripts which selected themselves because of interest value (sufficient length of text, subject content, visual interest or colour) fell quite naturally into two separate categories, very largely by reason of the boys choice of visual

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schema or models. Their symbols or signifiers and their codes or context seem to have different origins, being heavily influenced by the world of caricature and graphic design, as their drawings will show - in this instance. This latter needs stressing since in the work of an older class I do not think that the same pattern emerges and certainly not with the same strength.

Ghosts - (the written tale) & The Ghost Buster cartoon - Surjit

Most of Surjit's ghosts looked very similar and were easily repeated to form a pattern around the margins. Both the prose and the images have a certain basic simplicity. (1a) Knowing that he borrowed the Ghost Busters symbol from Satnam, I remain uncertain as to what to read into the reduction during that process of three fingers to two but have to admit that the figure emerging from the mandatory road sign is bursting with energy and presents a rather uncertain smirk!

Ghost Busters, the cartoon version with its 'if-you-can't-beat-'em-join-'em' theme, is quite amusing. It follows his short story about haunting and is an imaginative piece. Its sources are probably *Ghost Busters* and/or computer games. The verbal text is fairly primitive having the odd dependent phrase with a string of main clauses. The sentences are not generally marked though there is some evidence of editing on the last three lines. His reading to the tape, although not very fluent, nevertheless indicated that he did know where sentences should have begun and

ended. Moreover he too re-drafted orally and then completed his final statement. He then tried to move from this to full cartoon form with only the odd speech bubble comment and a borrowed Ghost Buster symbol but it lacks full coherence without the writing. It rates 3 but only about (a) for interaction.

A comparison of the two versions might help their author to investigate how to describe in greater detail exactly what is happening in the visual script, either working it through with a teacher or, with a slightly more advanced peer.

Ghosts - Untitled

Whereas Surjit's story interacts with the slime-ball puffing ghosts around the edges, his friend (I'm not sure which one) tried a completely visual cartoon and therefore (5) on the scale but with only one aspect of the ghost busters at work it lacks a narrative thread and is more an enjoyment of the ghostly shapes and the Busters destructive carnage, so only (a) for interaction.

My Self -Davinderjit

Unlike Surjit, who gives a rather uninspired personal recollection about his acceptance into the 'gang', Davinderjit presents an insight into a very early occurrence and weaves a colourful and significant border about it.

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To emphasise his extreme youth, together with tears and spots, there are baby pain killers (the successor to Junior Aspirin?), baby bath lotion, a dummy and hair gel quaking together with toys and a jelly baby. Importantly this is a modem baby - he wears a Puma shirt. Advertising rules! The story is accompanied by relevant illustrations but the level of interaction, although it is there, the pictures do give some additional information, is not very high so 1 (a).

Again in Davinderjit's case reading the passage to the tape resulted in instant redrafting of parts of the text. His hesitancy on lines 10 and 11 were because of the incorrectly placed comma after "way". His intonation pattern would lead to a natural paragraph break at the end of line 8. He then reads "We had to keep giving it water" a little hesitantly, and adding "the car", even though the substitution "it" is perfectly acceptable and he has correctly inserted "to" for the infinitive (it was missing in the written text).

Quarter Backs 1,11,111 - Davinderjit and Frederick

In *Quarter Backs I, II and III,* he and his partner demonstrate that given a model, in this case an American comic, they have considerable drawing skill. On page I the first two frames, which, from the handwriting, are probably Frederick's, have a very neat pattern and design. I have some reservations concerning the story line though with its twenty-first century version of Grendel's mother rescuing her son!

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In 1 there is heavy reliance on the written text to provide cohesion, though the arrest in frame three is obvious enough. It is not totally clear whether the heroic figure, centre stage is named Quarter Back or not. It would seem that he plays for a team called the Tigers but what then is the significance of the titles? By *Quarter Backs II*, recognisable by his ringed black eye, our hero uses his well developed muscles to bend the bars apart and escape. Confusingly, since in I frames 2 and 4 it seems to have been suggested that he has been fr amed because he is too good, he now appears to be escaping with some kind of loot. From this point on there is a lot of violence of the video games or American comic variety.

In *Quarter Backs III* it is Davinderjit who, while not quite as neat or precise in his draughtsmanship, actually moves the figures away from the restraints of the originals as template and uses them to try to further the story.

This section is not coloured but QB is still identifiable by his Bermuda shorts and Mum has long blond hair, very red lips and a macho batman body. The narrative line is continued through the speech balloons and not very successfully apart from the miraculous escape for QB. It is a genuine cartoon attempt and rates 4 but with interaction held at (a) because of patchy coherence.

Genesis - Anon

The influence of the media in its various forms, including computer games, is very marked in the work of the boys in the group. When they came to

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drawing objects around which they were then to spin a story , they reflected strongly the popular trappings of our disposable society - Genesis, Bermuda shorts, headphones, radio telephones, the names of the big advertisers - *Casio* and *Adidas,* with, surprisingly, *The Guardian* representing the press [the misspelling wonderfully appropriate however] and the evergreen *Beno* [Beano]. The author(s) forgot their prime narrative purpose though.

Summary :

Howard Gardner and his colleagues came to the conclusion that there was an almost complete absence of metaphorical language in the work of children at about this Key Stage late in the primary sector.8 They attributed this to the intense absorption of grappling with 'fixing' meanings, with coming to terms with exact or accurate referential expression, and beginning to demonstrate is that both Wegener's principles of language development, emendation and metaphor, at the child's level are advanced by using the interaction of the verbal and visual texts.

Instances where basic punctuation, inverted commas, commas, full stops and paragraphs can be approached, lead on to the possibility of using the pictorial story form to look at the passive voice. What better way of discovering the agent? And all this most crucially, from the base line of what they have done already, from a positive achievement.

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If like Ortony, you believe in the 'constructivist' view of language with stress laid on its interactive nature, then metaphor is a vital element.[4] Metaphor does not vanish from the scene at this point in a child's development but it does go underground or borrow other clothing. Playing with visual narrative results, at a fairly simple level to begin with, in a use of different forms. Today's child learns early about man-made symbols and of course prior to that makes use of objects which represent 'other-than-they-are' in play. Thus if a broom equals a horse, then metaphor grounded in interactive forms such as these has very early precursors.

Symbolic development can work towards extension and improvement of the written form both syntactically and metaphorically. It needs judicious help. It is often necessary to point out to children what they have done in the visual text which is so much more advanced than their verbal version but from time to time they produce work of astonishing complexity as we shall see in the efforts of a slightly older group.

As they played with symbols, illustrations and pictures the potential for redrafting was clear, though much, like the colour shaping Fiaz's *Friendly Ghost*, was only partly conscious. The tacit needed realisation. The experimentation with differing illustrative procedures was recorded. The

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[4] Ortony (Metaphor and Thought, 1979, p. 1 and fol.)

focus was quite simply on what to illustrate or what a symbol was, not on how it was produced. Able draughtsmanship was useful but not essential.

From these actual, early samples emerged evidence of children's natural recourse, when given the opportunity, to visual symbolism with all its simple efficiency. In *School Performance* a very easy formula, probably half remembered from comics, served to refer to the whole school present in assembly and the authors welded experience and known stories quite readily. In this narrative the initial response was verbal and the redrafting visual. Problems to do with cohesion were exhibited and ways round them sometimes successfully found.

It was this particular group which showed the necessity of remembering that visual symbolism is not the only powerful medium; that sound for some children also plays a vital role. Re-editing onto tape for Tamarah, and others, made clear the replication of echoes of past stories, speech patterns and written rhythms.

The class was consciously encouraged to examine and use visual symbols borrowed from a variety of sources. The analysis which followed begins to show much untapped potential and to indicate ways in which ideas from the two drafts might be exchanged and exploited. The stress from a teaching perspective was on the symbolic and metaphoric content. The

symbolism allowed children to play with ideas and not just in respect of narratives either.

This second school sample showed a marked difference between the boys' approach and that of the girls. The boys made strong use of computer graphics and comic cartoon figures. They began with the symbols and items they were able to draw and fitted stories to them - with perhaps a couple of exceptions. The girls worked the other way round and tended to struggle with more complex concepts. Interestingly this difference between the sexes was nothing like so marked in the slightly older secondary groups.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Drafting with Cartoon Narratives -an experimental beginning.

Part 1

Introduction:

Part One of this chapter is concerned with the analysis and ranking of the narratives taken from some of the previous year's work of a Year Eight class. The written samples were used to select a small number of pupils to follow while ensuring a reasonable ability spread. The work of these children would be subject to close scrutiny throughout the experiment; Part 2 turns to analysis of their cartoon work.

Chapter Seven had prepared the ground in working with younger pupils on illustration and cartoon drawing. In this chapter the first part of the experimental programme is recorded. The criteria used by the LINC teachers who began the process and also the modified format we adopted for the later, written texts, together with the additional criteria for the cartoon stories can be seen in detail in Chapter Six. The writing tasks needed to be more firmly structured than the work with Year Six had been. The distinctions carefully drawn by Dixon and Stratta between personal

and imagined narratives were referred to, as was the use of humour or irony where relevant, together with consideration of sources drawn on.

The writing and drawing of the slightly younger primary group had pointed the way to a number of areas worth examining in greater depth. First I was looking for symbolic interaction. When drafting with visual images, quite frequently interesting detail failed to reappear in the written version. In Chapter One the absence of pre-modification was noted and moreover, the severe lack of attributive adjectives: in that respect "Six Feet Under" lacked linguistic colour. Was this where suitable intervention could make a difference? That writing development is not linear or happily sequential would obviously have an effect and perhaps the experiment needed to be given a much longer time span? It always seemed to be the case that children were blissfully unaware of the relative difficulty of imaginative writing compared with the personal response and yet, though this is generally so for written texts, the reverse usually operates for visual texts because of the models children can find to draw on.

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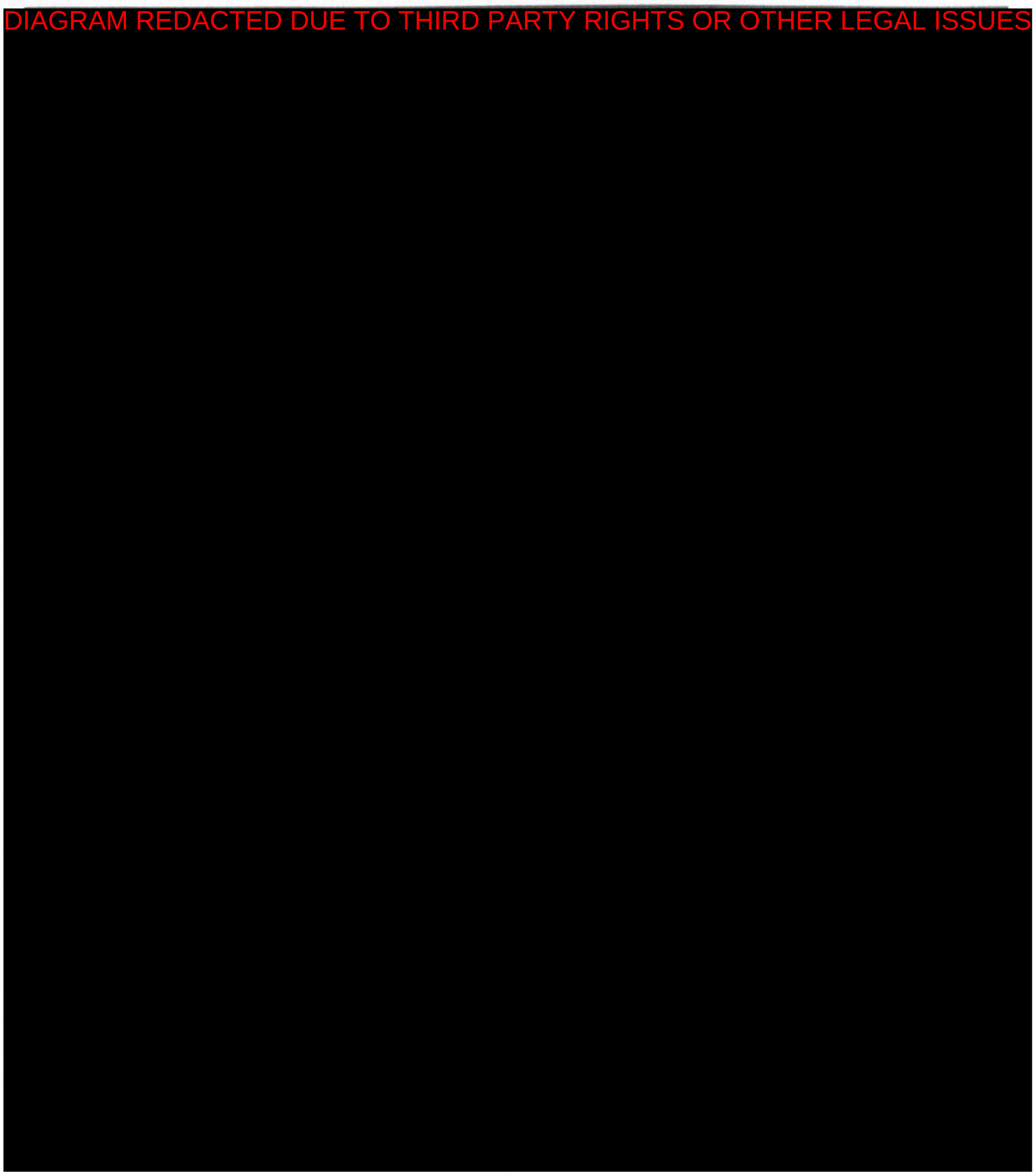
The Scripts

The selected texts were *Hogarth and the Iron Man, Grandad, Dressing Up, Kingsbury 2000, Help Mates, The Rescue* and *Peter and the Wolf*", and they ranged from a mature piece of writing with some considerable

metalinguistic awareness already showing itself, to a rather inadequate retelling with no personal engagement in evidence.



What follows now is a detailed look at the work of those seven pupils and their level of achievement in their first year of secondary education.

The Further Adventures of Hogarth and the Iron Man - Esther

This continuation from the original Ted Hughes' story is lively and entertaining with delightful touches of humour. As an imaginative piece it has, what so many at this stage lack, credibility. The characterisation of the Iron Man himself is slight but effective. Hogarth makes an excellent foil, while the professor's irritation is quite cleverly, on one occasion, shown rather than reported. (Children can handle both diegesis and mimesis.)

The play on the pronouns, lines 14 to 21, reveal a writer who is really very confident with language and she goes on to offer her reader a number of simple quips which appear to be original. There is the reference to the Iron Man's 'sieve' to which he not unreasonably takes exception, and I love the "Martini Extra Dry otherwise I shall rust" comment.

The whole is told in the third person but the characterisation is developed through direct speech. The ordering chosen is straightforward chronology, the conversation and the humorous asides varying the pace nicely.

Clearly her main source is Hughes' modern fable but the continuation of the tale moves firmly in other, more down-to-earth directions because, though this is almost a fantasy, she has woven decidedly child-oriented

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Paragraphing and surface features are handled well, and the syntax is generally quite simple but there are some examples which demonstrate her ability to embed clauses and phrases and use more subtle connectives. The opening sentence with its parenthetical insertion into the main clause, promises well. The Iron Man is both the central character and an exophoric reference to the book.

There is further evidence of growing confidence and maturity in lines 34/35/36. This is a long sentence, or perhaps more accurately, two, joined by an additive conjunction with a nominal clause (object) appearing in the second half. Then again in lines 50/51 she develops quite a complex structure and to create a different stress, splits the adverb "Then" from the main clause by inserting the adverb clause between it and the subject.

Like the humour, the origins of the text are more in the oral tradition than the literary. The vocabulary, though she knows how to play effectively with words, is fairly commonplace and should present no difficulty for her peers. There is of course a danger in assuming that only complex language can express complexity of thought as Labov pointed out so forcibly quite a while ago now and though this text is relatively simple it reveals fairly advanced thinking. There is in addition to an overview of story and plot, an emergence of metalinguistic awareness in her word play which is encouraging.

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Grandad - Vicky

"Grandad" was a piece which impressed my fellow moderators; they considered putting it first in the order and with its gentle sympathy it is easy to see why. They did not, mainly because the purely personal note seemed to make it easier to write effectively. Nonetheless I have some reservations about their ordering of the selected seven and believe that close analysis may show why.

The surface features including the spelling are all handled with confidence; the writer is aware of paragraphs. The textual organization is straight chronology, based as it is on recent and obviously vivid personal experience, but it does not stop there since she intersperses it with moments of reflection which imply rather than state the author's position.

The entire passage is in the first person, but the ordering of the clause structure, particularly in the fourth paragraph offers a more personal note, the passive voice equating her unease with distance. This is quite rare in the writing of these children, and its effectiveness is helped by the initial cleft construction emphasising the writer's own feelings while allowing the non-finite nominal, "to see the big bag of blood", to retain the normal end focus of new information. She rounds it off nicely with the simplicity of the subsequent sentence; the positioning of the adverb with the second adjective, not the first, again offering meaningful stress.

"As well as pneumonia my grandad also suffers from leukaemia and when we were there he was having three units of blood put into his body by a tube. It made, me feel quite ill to see the big bag of blood. He was pale and very thin."

Through such techniques the reader is allowed to share most of the experience. One thing bothers me though. Grandad, until the very end is always qualified with a pronoun which distances him from her audience and her eponymous central figure remains an unknown quantity.

Dressing Up - Karen

The third example, "Dressing Up" by Karen is another piece of personal writing and one which explores the subject of imaginative play , in the process drawing upon Santa and Wonder Woman.

There are a few apostrophes missing, paragraphs have not happened and so on, all of which would be quite simple to put right, so that potentially this is a very promising little text. In the space of forty-seven lines it is an accomplished snapshot. The opening is fairly predictable but it develops with humour and insight - and , best of all it brings the reader back to earth with the narrator with a gentle bump - food filling the imaginative gap.

Such as we know of Mum is given by showing rather telling. She has a

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comfortable supporting role with a resigned but gentle response. It is elaborated through that oh-so-telling-sigh and the admonition concerning neighbourly sensitivity. In addition there are the questions at the end from the busy tea-provider, offered more to maintain phatic communion than from real interest. There is an intelligent awareness of adult modes of expression which make only the right noise and fail to display serious involvement.

The story, once more in the first person, is focussed through the narrator who is also the principal "actor" now marginally older and wiser. There are not therefore the linguistic clues from the focussing persona that Dicken's adult Pip can give us to demonstrate increased maturity but the slight lapse of time does permit a rather wry, sardonic 'adult' comment; to wit;

> The garden was quite chilly. At least I thought so, but then I only had my vest and knickers on ....and the authentic....
> I flew across the ice and snow. It was too cold to walk and anyway it would take too long.

It is touches like these that could only have come from the by now nearly twelve year old author and which lead to more consciously humorous passages like the earlier ...

"..you smell awful have you been using my best perfume?".. with its cheeky riposte ... "Only the best for Wonder Woman!"

Once children become involved in developing cartoon narratives the telling/showing or diegesis/mimesis distinction, which in a written narrative

most cope with quite happily, changes, partly because a verbal description of non-verbal events is no longer necessary.

Both Karen and Vicky, because they were asked to record a biographical incident and thus became inescapable participants in the story, were automatically restricted to the self as narrator and internal focalizer. They handled their very different approaches to the affective element rather well. Karen's light-hearted, humorous tale with its realistic, direct discourse weaves an integral invitation for reader response into the whole fabric, whereas Vicky's piece with its highly emotive content hit a sensitive balance between distanced description and an appeal for sympathy.

Kingsbury 2040 - Hazel

Hazel's story came next in the pecking order, entitled *Kingsbury 2040*. It seemed quite daunting owing to the closeness of the writing and the complete absence of paragraphing but in taking on the future she had set herself a task which was of a greater level of difficulty than that of most of the others and with some degree of success.

The setting is the "Macheine Age" and "Machiences" are on her timetable for that particular day. She prepares the ground thoroughly; as she arrives at the gates on her motorised scooter, a sign tells her, and her readers, that new electronic doors are being fitted. From the look of the text it has been written very fast which is commensurate with the

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impatience she expresses about wanting to get her machine to finish it and share it, if it works, with her friends.

When she went to her form room to her surprise, but hopefully not to ours if we have read carefully, the door "opened itself" she tells us.

By centring her story around a concept which is already a possibility, a voice controlled word processor, and putting that in the classroom she shows mature judgement. Obviously too she is making capital out of the way teachers, seizing on anything practical, use current materials to enliven lessons!

Help-Mates - Saba

This is a very odd tale where, as so frequently happens with inexperienced writers, the imaginative part goes 'over-the-top' and what could have been a happy fusion of the inventive and the personal comes badly unstuck.

She begins in the first person with a rather uncertain construction. The elision of the second "I" is a sound cohesive feature and, later in the sentence, also "that" as the co-ordinator for the nominal clause, is fair enough, continuing what might be seen as the relatively casual tone established with the title but the use of the past perfect or pluperfect would have been preferable in the subsequent noun clause.

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It was a sensible decision to weave a fiction around a familiar setting and friends, introducing some additional dramatic elements, and the moaning sister is always a reliable stereotype to build on. Fair enough too to compel those who have made a mess to clear it up - surely the sort of rough justice her readers would appreciate. At this stage things begin to go wrong and the author's over-exaggeration destroys her tale's credibility.

There are further difficulties in the text itself, although she was aware of her lack of paragraphing and had asked for help. Despite this there are hints of better things to come with "As usual they were all sleeping, that's all they were ever good at..." and the forceful promise of "When I got back I was alone, dizzy and had a black eyel" Pity about the ending but there is nonetheless a lot here to work on.

The Rescue - Andrew C

The Rescue was a rather pedestrian, sad, little script and the only one in which, given a free choice, the author began with an implied story teller and then switched without warning into first person narrative. If all his work had been like this there would be a cause for concern because the 'mechanics' are reasonable, even if a few commas are missing. He usually prints but it is at least legible and most of the punctuation, syntax and spelling (other than 'tiped') are handled with care. What is worrying, is that even when there is an unintentional shift of focalization (l.3), this is a very detached piece of writing.

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One wonders why he chose to tell this tale. He did make an effort to inject some life into it at first, beginning with the "warm sunny day" and moving to ... "the sea began to get rough and windy", however inaccurately linked the last adjective might be, but it is all so matter of fact - no empathy or sympathy with the two in the cold water, not even with the character John through whom he is now relating the adventure. And, while it is very clear he is no Arthur Ransome fan, most people would avoid the expression "a ride on a rowing boat".

Yet again there are hints that if he had been even marginally involved with the subject matter he could have produced a much more satisfactory response. See for example lines 9 and 10: -

Back on shore the man who lent us the boat saw his little boat coming in to shore...

The main clause is fronted by an elided relative clause; he has also extended the subject with another one and moreover, added a further non-finite relative clause where 'which was' relating to the boat has been elided. It is a pity he did not attend more carefully to what he had written since if he can handle sentences of that complexity he must surely be capable of finding either an alternative expression or a simile for 'shore'.

Peter and the Wolf - Andrew Chr

When we come to Andrew Chr.'s contribution, it is a retelling which makes a fair appraisal difficult. Clearly the music department was happy with it in

respect of its content and the musical form of each of the sections of the orchestra may be echoed in the rhymic form of the text but it has not as a piece of writing resulted in interesting cohesion or any complexity of syntax.

Without knowing more concerning teacher expectation and pupil effort, in this instance, all there is to go on is the actual organisation of the text on the grounds of syntax and punctuation. And that does not feel very satisfactory - either way.

There is some very careless marking of sentences although he began as though he understood the mechanics but although when grandfather speaks, Andrew remembers to open inverted commas he does not remember to close them. It feels singularly unfair to assess his achievement or ability on this piece. There are suggestions that he could do better. He is obviously capable of humour (see the ending), though the connectives, loosely tacking on a list of adverbials are in the main boringly 'then', 'so' and 'but'.

Summary:

These then are the seven candidates selected from amongst those for whom we had a previous year's narrative script in order to ensure as wide

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an ability range to work with as possible (given that is, the original banding).

As we looked at these stories it became uncomfortably clear that, yet again, evidence showed the futility of end-of year examinations to put writing in any hard, ranked order. Yes, some of these pieces stood out as being well written and fun to read but the closer look at the texts shows how comparatively little help would place most of these youngsters on an equal footing. Moreover, one - not one of the seven - who on the evidence of earlier work was ranked somewhere near the bottom, when given the obligatory end-of-year English paper came out on top with a highly entertaining expose of her 'beatnik' family!

And there is another factor to consider. I implied earlier a slight uneasiness with the ordering. Some children seem to develop an ability to handle the ordering of narrative mode before developing, or at any rate showing, development of more complex structure. Others, perhaps through lack of interest suggest some facility with language but produce prose of the order of Andrew Co., while still others attempt much more difficult tasks which we as teachers often, under pressure of time and numbers, fail to recognise fully or to prepare our pupils for.

Part 2

Introduction:

The work of the seven selected pupils as they begin to use visual narrative is examined here in some detail. The visual narrative is seen as a continuum of increasing difficulty from illustrated text at one end, to wholly picture narration at the other. The response is very varied but demonstrates how some pupils experiment to great effect. Two in particular are obviously happier using verbal symbols, while two others seem simply to reject this method of drafting. Despite this, the total impression is one of positive achievement provided certain cautionary notes are sounded.

With only a single thirty-five minute period a week available, and moreover, one which occurred first thing in the morning, running the gauntlet of extra long assemblies, or year group meetings, time to introduce this class to a full programme in respect of either the cartoon or narrative input was severely limited. However they were slightly older than the earlier participants, and they were banded, so the pace could be a little faster.

Initially, as with the Junior class, we examined the narratives beginning with personal and autobiographical writing. When it came to consideration of why imaginative writing was more difficult than personal writing it was clear that this was not something that many of the children had recognised. It was also a matter which ought to have been looked at in

greater depth in smaller groupings or even, perhaps on an individual basis, since this seems to be an area where the children's perspective could differ wildly from that of an adult reading their work. Arising at least in part from this, the concepts of audience or the implied reader were also touched on briefly.

The term "implied reader" is not used as the complex reconstruction or interpreter of text to whom literary critics might refer. "Intended reader" could have been an alternative but was avoided because of the number of occasions in children's writing when it is far from clear that there is any deliberate intention. The term then is merely used to indicate the possible consideration of readership. In most instances this 'reader' is assumed by default to be the teacher but sometimes the text suggests that the peer group is the target.

Respecting the analytic framework we had devised, if at first glance B, the visual one seems more complex, it is probably only because it is somewhat longer, whereas the verbal analysis A, with which we began, may actually be asking rather hard questions of young writers. (This may be more especially so since this is not the age range with which Dixon and Stratta were working.) Aspects one and two, "Resources Used" and "Organization", seem reasonable concerns about any narrative writing, and five, "Use of Language", is an essential starting point whatever the age of the writer. Aspects three and four, "Viewpoint" and "Demands on

the Reader", though difficult in that they demand a distancing from the text, seemed to be the concepts which become very important in relation to the writer's handling of the process and also to consciousness of the "implied reader" so, after much discussion about our list, we kept them all.

Based on past examples from younger children, I expected that aspects three and four of the analytic framework would be areas where cross-modal drafting could effect some interesting changes and help to increase awareness; help therefore to put the writer in control. Elaboration of some of these issues would begin to show what additional factors needed to be taken into account when scrutinising the work of the seven selected subjects.

Dixon and Stratta were particularly concerned with the models used and whether they were spoken or literary. Certainly samples from the Junior class showed 'the language of the book' influencing very inexperienced writers and, at times, almost where one might least expect it. Sometimes more successful examples of imaginative work can occur as part of other lessons; history perhaps, where research, integral to the process, introduces historical facts adding a touch of verisimilitude to an empathic account. So often though, experimentation with imaginary experiences results in dismal failure; usually because it is asked for by the teacher without proper preparation or because it is a response to a list of suggested titles. Stressed in the paper were the demands which the authors felt imaginative scripts

made but they also said that such writing opened new opportunities and fresh options.

Metalanguage or metacognitive awareness in any text needs to be acknowledged; it may result in the writer ordering or re-ordering events more imaginatively with the subsequent affect on the reader. It will allow the writer to foreshadow or contrast themes and know when to reveal retrospective awareness.

Yes - these are advanced techniques and of course the organising principle must be sorted out, the writer can no longer rely on sequential memory but, helped at the right moment, children can produce some highly effective responses. This is of course a matter where cartoon drafting can be so helpful.

Among the many difficulties likely to be encountered by the inexperienced, are those of over-compression, probably an inability to draw satisfactorily on sources, together with difficulties arising from the choice of the form and structure of the narration. Should it be diary, monologue, running commentary, letters or stream of consciousness? The options seem endless.

When Rimmon-Kenan talked of narration where focalization need not be attributable to the same agent, she had adult authors in mind but

youngsters occasionally achieve similar complexities. Her question concerning internal or external narration can be expressed quite simply as "Who sees?" and "Who speaks?" Moreover when attention is turned towards 'viewpoint', is the writer making assumptions about the reader's acquaintance with setting, character or events, and is there an implicit taking into account of readers without an exactly similar experience and who may have different attitudes or points of view?[1]

Respecting the fourth aspect, and the writer's assumptions, it is useful to consider the egocentricity of the writer and the level of empathy displayed concerning the thoughts and feelings of other participants - both characters and the readers, since it's yet another indication of metacognition at work.

These then are some of the theoretical problems to be borne in mind. The next stage though was to introduce cartoon work so we read *The Practical Princess* together, discussing its visual impact in some detail. Its many humorous twists make it an ideal story for the purpose of dealing with graphics and thwarted narrative expectations.

For the next few weeks we beavered away at producing some practical samples of cartoon story which might be drawn on, or just drawn! Some of

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[1] Rimmon-Kenan (1983)

these were *Tom and Jerry, Spitting Image'* figures from comics, computer graphics and the Nerguls. [2] At home or in class, planning was undertaken for a full cartoon, or a half cartoon and half written version in an effort to look at features of cross fertilisation.

During the preparatory sessions on drawing cartoons various models were explored as had been done previously with the Junior school group. The graphic representations of personal stories in mind, we also discussed how cartoonists focus on people's salient features and exaggerate them and how a similar lampooning process might be effected with the written word.

It was of course quite possible that at this stage in their development some of the group might reject the visual approach altogether, but with the exception of two, or possibly three, they threw themselves happily into the task and, in fact, I was swamped with material. Quite apart from the chosen seven as our representative sample, there were many interesting and novel pieces which still raise a chuckle and it has been extremely hard to select the 'extras' which simply cannot be left out. Even at the time of writing the room is strewn with cartoon stories, visual jokes and written versions that refused to stop. It would have been marvellous to

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[2] See 266

have been able to introduce this group to the kind of creative arts programme that produced Big Feet Pete.

At about this time it became clear that though the Year Seven work samples could not, for reasons already stated, help much as a guide to progress, they would be an extremely useful reference point. The deliberate selection of seven as a manageable number plus the insistence on sample representing a spread of achievement meant that the temptation to ignore those whose work did not seem immediately to be very promising was obviated and that they too, would come under close scrutiny. As luck would have it, two of the three who appeared very unenthusiastic about drawing were in this small section and, whereas their response reduced the effectiveness of the drafting as a learning process for them, it must serve as a warning that by no means all youngsters fit happily into this mould. It is, again as stated earlier, important to allow children the right not to draw.

There are apparent degrees of difficulty in the visual drafting process, in that it is really very hard once you have reasonable access to language to tell a story completely without words; there is an extremely high level of abstraction needed. The illustrated story is thus probably the easiest at one end of the spectrum, while at the other the story told solely in pictures is the most difficult to achieve effectively. It was only suggested that the class might want to try this, not that they should. Somewhere in between is the

narrative which uses a mainly visual approach and only a few words of written text to support it. With this continuum in mind as a rough guide (see Chap. 6 p.201) I want now to examine the seven children's work in some detail.

The Cartoon Stories

Esther's written work was always far more intriguing than her cartoons, which in view of her ability to handle language is hardly surprising, but she was willing to do her best and seemed to enjoy the change.

She experimented as requested with the different formats. When asked to begin with part one as written text, she moved into the autobiographical mode. This was actually before the group had discussed ways into personal writing and family failings.

My Experience - Esther

My Experience tries to cram far too much into just over half a page of written text. It seems almost as though because she can write, she needs to learn all over again how to develop ideas in this new medium. To move from the illustrated story into the cartoon mode appears to be very hard for her.

Part one is rather like a set of captions for pictures she hasn't drawn and

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Later in her next piece she began, as asked on this occasion, with the visual format first. The Christmas story is heralded by the holly sprig in the corner, the symbol serving the dual purpose of decoration and context elaboration. She uses colour well, distributing it on the page so that it adds to the cohesion, carrying the eye in a sweep from top right to middle left and back down to the bottom right. Even the wavy underlining has a contextual force because it is adorned with tomato pips.

As so often happens now, the advertising business shapes young people's knowledge and understanding of symbols and the *Tomatoe Man*, our hero, is the plastic Wimpy sauce bottle. Page one is a cast list of characters, some of whom are stars, while others, like the prune, play a very minor supporting role. She delights in playing with language and the insultingly labelled 'pea-brains' are assonantally named. And see how she has referred to Cauliflour power with wrinkled, white face. The somewhat rakish prune, by contrast, must have read Packard's *The Hidden Persuaders* ! In the narrative, Tomatoe Man assumes a sort of tutelary angel function or, perhaps he owes something of his origins to Superman?

Frame 2 has more of an unheard auditory function than a visual one. The words "Ho ho hic" lead to the drunken figure of Santa - a rather slim line version. The caption under it is not very well welded to its related frame so missing cohesion, since it might almost, through its placement, be part of frame five. Indeed this whole section is visually rather unco-ordinated.

"This is Caulie's work" is the only caption used which lacks a right hand boundary. The only really cohesive link present comes in frame four, making rather unfair demands on the reader. It is the anaphoric one of the blue-green outer leaves of the cauliflower. If the reader remembers the first page, then Caulie does stand out from his leaf-green counterparts. To be fair there is also a cataphoric reference to the next frame where the spiteful, but otherwise motiveless, Caulie is planning Father Christmas's downfall and this time the author makes sure that the caption is firmly attached through the prepositional arrow.

Frame seven works through implication only - but it works because the author has ensured that all the necessary cues are there. At this point she reintroduces the holly motif whose berries offer a cross-page link and are of a brighter hue than the 'party-radish' like eyes of drunken Mr Christmas and his reindeer.

The inebriated state of poor old Santa is very heavily emphasised, visually and verbally, perhaps because if Santa symbolises Christmas, then it is truly awful that he is drunk. Then comes the big joke this has all been building up to.... "tomatoe puree!" Never mind all is not lost; "scraped back together" mighty Tomatoe Man captures the wicked Caulie and, given a sobered Santa thanks to the diminutive pea-brains, all will be well.

The end is pretty abrupt; she's put the joke on paper, Caulie in prison, and run out of ideas. Nor am I sure why the prune now has horns but maybe the implication of the last comment is that our learned author is also drunk "Ho Ho Ho Hic!"

The actual fusion of the two sections is strong since she simply continues on the same sheet of paper and a pictorial image crops up in the midst of the writing. She scores 3 on the continuum and though cohesion wobbles at times she has a commanding overview of some aspects of her task. She takes a very intelligent approach to the use of visual imagery and colour to create cohesive features and link narrative ideas to an extent which places her at level vi point 3(c) although others prove to be better cartoonists than she is.

The story line is not especially strong and has to be teased out. However there is an increasing level of interdependence of word and picture, in this her second attempt. It might, owing to one or two close-up facials, be possible to explore the emotions of her characters in some depth but not perhaps appropriate. This is a light hearted tale concentrating on (in Esther's fashion) pun and joke.

The Diary of the Fly - Vicky

In the work of Vicky we again have a youngster whose verbal competence is far in advance of her drawing ability. Especially in the early

stages neither she nor Esther thought of drawing on models and copying images from the world of comics. They lacked a 'vocabulary', or schemata from which to work. For such pupils it is necessary, if they are to benefit properly from working in the different medium, to offer a more detailed input than there was time for in this case. Either that or leave them in the purely written mode. Given more time these are the pupils who could go on very rapidly to consider more complex literary features such as focalization or the shape and time span of their narratives.

With *The Diary of the Fly*, there do not seem to be any very obvious external sources apart from Adrian Mole as the model for the diary, so the narrative is a fusion of empathetic imagination and personal knowledge. The fly itself, from its colour, must be a blue-bottle. Interestingly in the second picture, the lunch as well as the fly, is getting sprayed, though looking at the representation but for the caption it could well have been our old friend Tomatoe man again!

By frame three the insect is tucked up warmly in a sleeping bag, sweating out the effects of the noxious spray and once more it is a good thing there is the verbal text too. A willing participant this, she did as asked and used very simple images to tell her story but she has little understanding of perspective - just look at frame five, and six is no better. The narrative viewpoint though, is constant and generally it is fair to say that, as far as

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her drawing ability will allow her, she struggles to avoid ambiguous statement.

In part two the fly is emerging from what one might have been forgiven for believing to be a terminal position! Immediately the story starts to expand; before it ends there is a nice fusion of observed reality into the imagined tale - "One of my legs was missing!"

Having read *Grandad* more might have been anticipated, especially when we know that she has the skill to have elided some of the many 'I's. Nonetheless having said all that, there is consistent focalization through the fly as narrator, in both sections. Ultimately this is a story told through the captions with added illustrations not a cartoon, the medium is not really made to work for her. Since the pictures do add to the written story line, there is definite interchange (b) but it only qualifies for continuum level 3 as a series of pictures plus text.

My Family - Vicky

In the next piece, an autobiographical sketch called *My Family*, is also an illustrated narrative but the 'plot' is offered twice. In class we had attempted to explore ways we might cruelly lampoon our families, ways we might seize on salient features to exaggerate and mock. Vicky tries valiantly, even indulging in a little self-ridicule in an effort to be fair. All the

same it is nearly impossible to extract meaning from frame five without the written version.

She really only merits 2 on the continuum because although the cartoon meaning is clear in the first three frames, she has "said" very little and despite the order, the drawings are not much more than straight representation of the written version. Though the pictures have details, the writing does not and there is no real interaction between the two halves, the picnic for example (frame 6) does anything but conjure up the notion of the delicious meal we are told they had, so the interaction remains at a rather basic (a). Though this piece's rating is not high, the drawings could be helped to develop enabling her to get much more enjoyment out of drafting like this. Youngsters trying out this visual technique do not have to draw at all if they do not want to; they can copy or trace, cut out from comics, invent shapes with coloured paper - anything they like but of course that does take preparation time, which, most sadly in this case, we lacked.

Both these girls have a more logo-centred approach when they are thinking metacognitively and there are a number of possible reasons why. They had both been successful verbally, they were good readers, very competent writers and happily joined in class discussion. Neither of them demonstrated any great facility with the pencil, drawing just was not a

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favourite pastime and not the symbolic form to which they would turn for the expression of ideas. After all if you are able in English and have only a smattering of French.....? Despite that, they both tried and seemed to have enjoyed the experience. Given more time to explore differing uses of graphic symbols, more time to develop another language and who knows? Some youngsters were lucky enough to be gifted in both media and so despite the lack of input began to produce some very interesting examples.

Goldilocks - Karen

Karen has some difficulty with accurate perspective but she is a neat worker producing images which are ordered, arranged, even patterned on the page. Her first narrative uses a source, a nursery tale, which will of course be familiar to most of her peers and so in theory at least, should reduce problems of cohesion and coherence. Frame 1 sets out the cast and lest we should be in any doubt, each of the three bears is labelled in respect of its familial role. Dumpy little baby bear, in his orange romper suit, supplies the key to the context - "porriage"!

All the clues are there, all the reader has to do is to bridge the illocutionary gap between Baby bear's complaint, Daddy bear's suggestion and Goldilocks admiring the neat house directly in front of her. The reference to the story of *The Three Bears* is exophoric and dependent of course on a shared culture.

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Frame two is graphically speaking pretty immature with no attempt to make the house look solid and three-dimensional. The fence goes slap across the picture bisecting it and its visual cohesion is really only saved by the placing of the speech bubble. Goldilocks' head is a broken circle with yellow 'springs' stuck all over it. Our author is no Durer but she is undeterred, and rightly, because as will be seen, she goes from strength to strength learning new dialects in this visual language.

She is clearly uneasy about the strength of her message, yet the captions are virtually superfluous - the power of the cross and the tick in the education world are pervasive. Even if the reader found the strange view of the beds a bar to comprehension, the anaphoric reference of Daddy bear's speech in frame five sorts it all out.

The heavy underscoring of "my porriage, chair and bed" together with Daddy bear's menacing grimace demonstrate the visual symbol's power to enhance the written text. Frame six raises a gentle smile, the arm position may not have been intentional but Daddy and Mummy have a firm shoulder-instigated shrug while Baby bear, who doesn't get the response quite right, has a slightly more apologetic, almost questioning gesture in his droopy little rompers.

In the very last picture there's a surprisingly sophisticated drawing; Karen has 'borrowed' the eyes and mouth from some other cartoon figure but it gives her what she needs and it works.

This cartoon is a mixture of presentational forms (e.g. frames 1, 6, 7), narrative action (2, 8, 9) and symbolic representation as in 3, 4 and 5. The interaction is especially strong in the 'symbolic' frames and there is potential for developing an improved written draft from this story. It achieves 4 on the continuum and level (c) overall for interaction with the pictures carrying the narrative thrust.

The "Bugsy Stories" which are her next venture, represent an advance on a number of fronts but since they are a pure figment of the imagination, the reader, unable to rely on shared narrative understandings in *Goldilocks,* will need clear signals in order to interpret the plot.

There are two possible sources which may have been the immediate trigger to the character of Bugsy and to Biggy who follows. To instigate the whole process they were told a tale about *Nerguls,* tiny furry creatures each with huge eyes, a hidden mouth and webbed feet to enable them to paddle through the water oozing from the leaking central heating system running under corridor floors in many Birmingham schools. They are caught, as any lover of fur-lined boots knows, in empty television boxes

when the snow is on the ground. Traps to ensnare them are easy to set on account of their schizoid personalities.

From years seven to eleven these stories are greeted with hoots of derision, since their prevailing characteristic is one of total improbability, but they succeed in their objective - to break the ice.

With this class, this would not have been hard but with some of the most difficult children in inner-city areas there was strong need to persuade them to allow themselves to enjoy learning in the classroom. More able pupils can more readily suspend their disbelief but ultimately the aim and the result are the same. For that reason the nerguls began. The other probable influence here was *The Monster Garden* by Vivienne Alcock. Perhaps too, as an after thought for all Spielberg fans who have ever surreptitiously shed a tear, *E.T.* must be given some credit for Bugsy's conception.

Bugsy - Karen

The first Bugsy story is all cartoon. The unseen narrator introduces him to us, a simple small green shape with tape-like, crimped orange arms, big blue eyes and freckles. And then in frame two our narrator lets Bugsy join in. His speech bubble completes the sentence. A simple but effective device inviting the reader in to share the fun. By frame three we realise that Karen is reflecting knowledge of parental complaints about untidy children and

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their toys with her own, purely fictitious tale. There are a number of children's stories which may also be being drawn on unconsciously too.

Frames seven and eight show that though she is working carefully towards a range of cartoon 'vocabulary', it does not yet include the ability to represent three dimensional objects on a flat two dimensional surface. These frames also underline that even if the message got through, Santa merited better treatment than I - he gets cookies! Regularly the class were told that living on leftover crisps, chewed chewing gum and the dregs of Coke and 7Up did not do Hamish McNergul's digestion any good and that what he really appreciated was the odd bottle of Scotch and packet of toffees left behind the door after school - all to no avail.

There are still signs that the writer is reluctant to let the pictures speak for themselves. Perhaps awareness of her drawing powers obliges her to make doubly certain that the cues for comprehension are there for the reader. She even does it in the last frame of all where surely the symbolism of " ZZZZzzzZZ" is readily accessible to everyone? Here Bugsy's closed eyes and open mouthed snoring are a tribute to her increasing understanding of this medium rendering the captions much less necessary. The major thrust for the narrative here is captured in the words but they have a strong interrelation with the images, as has been noted with the speech bubbles which directly address the reader and the writing on the page in frame reader. She even does it in the last frame of all where surely the symbolism

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Our New Roller Boots - Karen

Our New Roller Boots begins with the written text, and from the way Karen has presented it, would seem to have some excellent visual opportunities with a number of references to colour. It is a pity that these are not exploited to any great effect in the subsequent cartoon. However, whatever symbolic mode is used to express ideas, or in this case, a narrative structure, progress is never a matter of straight linear development. This pupil is experimenting with different concepts and percepts and, it must be added, with inadequate teacher feedback. Largely unaided, her drawings for example, still manage to demonstrate a graphic advance in many instances. (See frames 2, 3 and 4 where she is beginning to cope with the creation of three dimensional space, though the self portrait in 3 suffered by comparison with frame 1.)

As is her practice when she splits her stories into their two constituent parts Karen ensures strong cues for her reader to pick up the threads. The 'I' of the writer-narrator, strongly present in the written text is still there and present in the only written addition which is not in speech bubbles. It continues when she moves into the showing, dramatic mode of the visual statement. On this occasion her closing, rather smug comment - "*Do you want me to teach you how to roller skate?*' - is a challenge. This is the nineties where even quite little boys are aware of the way in which the chauvinistic reply the brother makes could infuriate. In the first section Karen neatly handles the major affective input so that male superiority in fame 1 and subsequent female retaliation (frame 4) can be summed up in the picture with only the briefest of written captions The continuum level is 4 and the interactive factor is high (c). There is promise here of better things to come, particularly since this autobiographical work proved easily the hardest task the class tackled.

From this writer we have come to expect careful observation and a delicately expressed understanding despite her youth, of how human beings behave and though the narrative line itself is not very strong we are not disappointed in this respect. She begins to offer models which could serve as ways in to a discussion of the affective force in writing with a means of exploring emotive issues and narrative voice.

Bugsy goes to the Zoo - Karen

With Bugsy firmly established as a character, Karen responded happily to the request to start her story *Bugsy goes to the Zoo* with cartoon and complete it in written format. Interestingly she has quite independently again decided to abandon the left - right format of prose (a format first tried in *Our New Roller Boots*), so to ensure cohesion, uses large arrows to indicate clearly text direction.

At the zoo turnstiles is an inanely smiling cat sporting a bow tie and with a ticket box notice reading "Pets welcome". This was a rather disconcerting touch of humour and I had hastily to read part two to be certain that the whole story had not reversed the human - animal situation. The joke proves therefore to be counter productive in cohesive terms.

Not withstanding, there is considerable progress being made here in telling a story with the minimum of words. The perspective too, shows vast improvement even to the tapering of Polly's perch in frame 6. The visual symbols are being made to work for their living. She even invokes sound though the onomatopoeic representation in the fourth picture, while the omission of a 'noise' for the monkeys is probably unintentional and quite amusing. She obviously did not know what to put.

Frame seven makes the reader work quite hard but the illocutionary leap is properly prepared for. The public spot this odd little green monster and

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the shrieks lead to Bugsy's capture. A paler Bugsy (neat touch that) recedes behind the strong black bars of a cage.

If part two is inspired by *The Monster Garden* it is far from a straight copy. This section is a new departure. It is linked cohesively by the speckled titleto our hero, left 'in extremis' in part one. Having abandoned normal textual direction in the cartoon, the writer appears to see no reason why she should not do the same in the sequel. The arrows now become absolutely vital to comprehension. She very nearly loses the thread for the reader though at the point where frame three ends, because the vertical line, approximately bisecting the page is continuous, forming a common boundary for frames four, six and seven. If only she had set six slightly to the right.

However she then uses what is perhaps one of the simplest and most effective endings - the large cartoon-type lettering THE END. How often youngsters write 'The end' when they finish, only to be told by unappreciative adults that it is not appropriate, whereas here it is the perfect ending and is the best cohesive device she could have chosen to weave the two parts together.

Just as each frame of part one could be a paragraph, so each "frame" of part two becomes almost a visual event and though it is not quite isomorphic - one paragraph, one frame - it is very close. Frames four and

six, for example, are heavily speech dominated but are also contextually bound units.

It should be said that what moved the author on conceptually to write in paragraphs at this stage is not clear, because some work on paragraphing had been done in a more conventional way, and possibly also with their other teacher. Since *Bugsy goes to the Zoo* is not dated it may have been written before the family tale which was scribed in March and where there is no paragraphing indentation. It is not possible to be sure. If indeed it was written before *Our New Roller Boots* then the difficulties of turning relatives into pictorial material may have meant that differentiation between one theme and the next was a low priority. Anyhow, whatever the order, the concept seems to have taken root since all further written work after Bugsy's zoological adventure is paragraphed. As in her previous work the level of exchange between the verbal and visual aspects of the text is high though the writing on the cartoon is minimal and mostly devoted to animal 'noises'. It is 4 on the continuum and the interactive factor is a very firm (c).

Biggy the Baby Monster - Karen

*Biggy the Baby Monster*whatever the source, is the last of Karen's cartoons and looks somewhat familiar - she is sticking to her formula. She uses inverted commas not speech bubbles with the speech in caption position. Part one represents yet another step forward in levels of difficulty. It has no

persona as narrator in the initial frames since the pictures do the work offering the pictorial equivalent of the third person.

Biggy falls from outer space as indicated by the radiating lines and the stars. Daylight comes and his rear end is discovered emerging from a dustbin. The struggle he undergoes to free him - her itself is captured in the word "Free!!!" The implied stress from the use here of the multiple exclamation marks, turns this locutionary symbol into a visual one as well. The effect is enhanced by the limp, droopy nature of Biggy's limbs and the flattened, hence slightly elongated, appearance of his antennae (see the healthy version in frame four). Notice too in that picture how the artist has 'borrowed' a pavement and drain from another source - the visual vocabulary is improving even if the 'spelling'- see the drain, is not quite accurate!

It is a point worth noting that, after those first three frames which are establishing the context, the story is related by Biggy and we, the readers, are shown events as they happen.

In part two the narrator, who has, like Biggy been almost invisible, steps forward to address us. The development of this story in this instance, clearly does owe much to the *Monster Garden* set in the tradition of loveable monsters like ET.

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There are moments when elaboration would have made this part of the tale more effective. The "*Wow*", line 38 (pt. 2), for example seems rather simplistic, and, though she may have intended it as an echo of part one, she has moved stylistically too far away for it to work. Neither has she carried through the kind of visual detail which could have led to more pre or post nominal modification in her character description in part two. All the same there are some interesting changes occurring. Grammatically the syntax is showing increasing complexity and embedding; paragraphing is firmly on the agenda now and although it would have helped if she had differentiated the speakers one from another, each speaker's words are correctly enclosed in inverted commas (lines 31- 38).

The imaginative written half (and therefore the more difficult task to cope with) is handled with considerable confidence- but then she of course she now has models! The pictures and words of the cartoon in part one are once more level 4 but the interaction is such that the verbal and visual symbols are interdependent and she is in the early stages of the development of a visual syntax - (c). The ending may be somewhat trite with a minor punctuation hiccup, but the sentences flow smoothly to the last gentle goodbye.

Copy Cat - Hazel

The next piece is Hazel's, whose slightly scruffy but imaginative *Kingsbury 2040* we have already seen. It is strange that she did not use more colour

but contented herself with a thinly applied red on the t.v. in frame one and an equally parsimonious scribble of brown on the central figure Copy Cat.

She is an untidy worker but by no means lacking in talent. She creates her character and 'borrows' some cartoon 'vocabulary' to do it - Copy Cat himself to some extent - and his claws in particular. In her creations she makes the drawings serve the ideas rather than indulging in a borrowing of of images and fitting a narrative to them. She uses a very few words mainly as captions to convey the slender story line.

What better programme to watch if you want to copy something than *Blue Peter*? The script is third person narrative plus two cartoon bubble comments from Copy Cat. Despite the 'Pink Pantherish' first and second frames promising rather more cartoon action, the work falls mainly into level 3. It is just an illustrated story and frames four and five provide some useful extra background detail which gives it an interactive factor of (b). It is a rather better effort than her subsequent biographical tale. In part two she summarises the action in frames one and two and then starts to add additional detail - the Cat's clothes, his toys, showing him trying a variety of television magicians' tricks that he has seen performed. The basic theme of failure is still there in the end with the notable exception of the Dwarf rabbit. It is as though rather than having conceived part one and

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continued and expanded the narrative line in part two, she has tried the same story but with different details to see how it works.

Initially it seemed a shame that she had not taken more paper home, because if she had joined the papers at the back, or even after she had written the text for the captions in frames four and five, then they could have been below. They are a poor cohesive feature and look rather unbalanced above the pictures. A slight tale, but mistakes and all, it still has potential and more especially as Copy Cat, like the earlier piece, shows no evidence of paragraphs but in part one it offers a way of explaining how such punctuating works thematically. As such it is a useful text.

My Life Ambition - Hazel

In *My life Ambition* Hazel followed the request to begin with the written text and again saw the two sections as related but separate story lines. If from her first two stories she had given the impression that she spent a lot of time watching television, the first of these two anecdotes does little to redress the balance.

In common with a lot of us, when she uses a fountain pen, the writing is a good deal neater; however care is now needed to distinguish full stops from blots! It is in character that, having taken so much trouble with the presentation, having by now grasped the idea of paragraphing, and

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having worked so hard on the punctuation, she still uses paper torn casually from an exercise book.

When, having begun in the past tense, Hazel switches to the present, it seemed at first as though the tense difficulty in *Copy Cat*, lines 9 and 15, might be owing to something more than just earlier carelessness but I think may have been deliberate. Perhaps she and I share more than an inability to spell abseiling, namely acrophobia. There is a considered decision to build up the tension; her head for heights proves not nearly so good as she had hoped and the change of tense prepares the reader for the fall. This particular example however, does not seem as successful as her earlier school story, neither does it really have the autobiographical nature asked for. It is more in the nature of a piece of recorded daydreaming following the written nightmare.

The cartoon half is a little closer to what was required but still has an air of wish fulfilment about it. Lack of artistic ability may be the key. There is no attempt to borrow in this section and, although frame five is actually quite an accurate representation of what the inexpert rider really looks like and the effect of six (black lettered 'SiGH' on a purple ground) is to sum up the longing rather well, combining the verbal and the graphic neatly, frame seven is spoiled by the fact that the car, which ought to be going, could equally well be coming! It is a picture story, 3, and while mostly the interactive factor is (a), frame six, with its significant colour, moves towards

(b) perhaps? With Karen there was a particularly strong necessity for feedback to make either *Copy Cat* or *My Life Ambition* work in terms of improving her writing. She needed to see what others had achieved in order to appreciate how she might improve overall narrative shape

The Terrible Twins - Saba

Of the two stories which follow by the next of the seven original pupils, *The Terrible Twins* by Saba was probably created before *The Tale of the Dodo-Dimples.* The germ of the idea may have arisen during a class discussion on twins and the swapping of roles is a common place enough theme.

Her understanding of punctuation at this stage is interesting. The two initial main clauses, which appear quite distinct, are very firmly separated for Saba by a comma, while the dependent clause beginning .. "Although.." follows a full stop. Perhaps she sees one and two as closely content-linked while three offers new information - for the reader.

In both tales there is a third person narrator, and both are illustrated narrative rather than cartoon. The formula developed in *The Specks* is continued in a slightly modified manner in *Dodo-Dimples.* In the first story the characters have more of a body attached and this may be because of the demands of the narrative. Mrs Lollipop-Head needs to be distinguished from the twins, while the only way of telling them apart, given what seem to be identical boiler suits, is the socks (a sexist pink for

Miss Specks we are told in the text, though the visual evidence suggests red). The ending is a dedication to twins, perhaps some she knows, showing an awareness of some publishing conventions.

In both of Saba's stories the pictures carry a good deal of background information not by any means reflected equally in the accompanying written text, despite its length. The appearance of Mrs Lollipop-Head for instance makes certain statements about her- the severe hair style, the thickened eyelashes, heavily lipsticked mouth and the tie.

The symbolism of the last mentioned item will not have escaped either the writer or her peers. School uniform is a constant, running sore and here, as in so many schools, the girls do not wear ties and the boys try not to. This is a level 2, a written narrative with a number of drawings which, however, interact with the text as we have seen adding some helpful detail at level (b).

Dodo Dimples - Saba

The Dodo-Dimples is a quaintly old fashioned, sort of 'Happy Families' tale which may reflect something of her background. All the circular Dimples look predictably similar, being differentiated by the odd moustache and hair-style. Mr Dodo and Grandpa Dodo, the latter still sporting a magnificent thatch, have by this means assumed an astonishing family likeness.

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Saba rarely uses direct speech but she handles the reported variety very competently (II,12/13) and then with the turn of the page moves her reader suddenly into the very recent past - "have just arrived" and almost into the present but just delayed by the adverbial phrase "back at home." The impact of this change is to usher in a sense of urgency. This is not the first time that the notion of an interrupted party has been her theme. It is a clever supporting device to use the split-screen image immediately prior to this tactic.

There is, despite avoidance of a fully visual narrative form, a good deal of experimentation going on, in that the drawings are far from a mere pictorial repetition of the written text - the same was true to a lesser extent with Hazel's work too. With both these young writers it would be worth exploring just what kinds of things they have managed to 'say' in their drawings and what ways they could translate this into their writing.

Flowers and sunshine open *The Tale of The Dodo Dimples* but then the stress referred to as ..."Miss Dodo Dimples was quite shocked" is enhanced by the adjoining sketch. Whatever is missing in the written character descriptions is supplied in the illustration, indeed the characters are represented in such a way that they could open the written page to further exploration of the associated traits of each.

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It is quite difficult to determine the level for this story. In one sense, like 'The Terrible Twins", it is only level 2 on the continuum as a simple, illustrated story, but "things", as we have seen, are happening and in her split screen device quite sophisticated visual techniques. The shape of her characters may be only a very simple cartoon symbol but it accidentally creates a strong relational likeness in her 'family'. All in all it achieves a dialogue between the pictures and the writing which is stronger than her previous piece, so (c)?

Football - Andrew Co

Andrew Co., by contrast, showed great reluctance to take part in any of the proceedings and produced his only finished effort at the stage when the class was working on autobiographical responses.

It is a story about kicking a football onto a shed roof and again, as in his Year Seven story, there is a great sense of distance from what should have been an involved and personal statement. Each picture and attendant clause or clauses represent a separate idea in chronological order. When he wrote part two it was merely a written reiteration of the captions of part one - the whole is a regression even from *The Accident.*

There is a temptation to dismiss this as the work of someone of lower ability and struggling but even in this boring and simplistic piece that is not possible. Each section or frame could easily have been expanded into a paragraph, he can use inverted commas, albeit a little carelessly, and he

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is not beyond changing the expected word order for effect, see frame four.

His effort is a continuum level 3 and (a) on the interaction scale, since he *has* tried to tell a story. Certainly his inability to draw proved a tremendous stumbling block for him and he made no effort to 'borrow', trace or copy, in fact he used every legitimate excuse to avoid completing anything. In a half hour first lesson on a Friday there are quite a few if you need them. If only he had applied the same inventiveness to ideas for narrative!

The Raid - Andrew Ch

Andrew Ch. was also not keen on the cartoon mode but he did the occasional quite skilled single drawing which was heavily derivative of the Sci Fi comic cum-computer-games genre. When he finally settled to create his piece de resistance, he left space for the illustrations which unfortunately were not finished since he ran out of time.

As the illustrative evidence is not available the work cannot be placed on the continuum, but it is worth commenting on its length and complexity and noting that it owes much of its 'colour' to the comic strip sources. This kind of imaginary, futuristic warfare, and not the types of narrative we considered in class, was what interested him most and, left to his own devices he writes similar material showing a good command of the right

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register, a sound understanding of the punctuating of speech, an ability to paragraph and all with a rather racy style.

Summary:

By this time it had become clear, if it had not been already, partly because of the way writing develops, that the experimental data could only give indicators of the usefulness of such a programme since confirmation of its findings would depend on information gathered over a very much longer time span.

During the teaching sessions which were on narrative and cartoon work, attention was drawn to ways in which the children might replicate certain characteristics of the visual drafting in their writing. Importantly, it can be seen that although most enjoyed this approach a few did not and an unrepresentative proportion (two) was in the chosen sample of pupils.

A continuum of relative difficulty emerged quite clearly from the work of this group (it was retrospectively applied to the analysis of the samples from the Junior school) from the illustrated story at the easiest end, to the fully visual cartoon at the other. Those who achieved more determinedly pictorial versions developed a visual 'vocabulary' of impressive scope. Some who, like Esther, were already far in advance of their peers in the construction of written narrative produced interesting cartoon work but lack of drawing ability seemed to be an inhibiting factor.

Increasingly the pattern of the research became one in which it was essential to return to the analytic framework to adjust the thinking and then to reread the scripts, illustrated and written, in the light of those adjustments - that often meant further changes to the categories used.

Whereas Framework A for the written scripts remained virtually unchanged throughout, once the team and I had agreed it, the analysis of the cartoons and drawings had demanded much more deliberation - even apparently simple decisions like where to start and finish the cartoon continuum in Framework B point (vi) because of the level of interaction it might indicate. The addition of C, the Interaction measure, also proved problematic. Should (a) for example, have been two or more separate levels? Which is the more advanced stage of abstraction, taking one symbol to represent the whole theme, or homing in with an illustration of a particularly significant moment and in respect of this research proposal does it matter?

Despite the fact that much of the original intention remains unaccomplished there was strong need to revisit the original work *Six Feet Under* and the Year Seven written narratives for reference. The last visits to the written work of the seven were in order to see whether there was any increase in linguistic detail or 'colour' in subsequent texts and whether the conjunction of the visual and the linguistic assist the qualities of cohesion and coherence in way which might be measurable. In the work of the

primary group it proved possible to record a level of interaction between the drawings and the writing and their story samples supported some anticipated areas of exploration. There was a need for further, more structured experimentation since the manner of working with this class had deliberately been too open-ended to measure the kinds and extent of progress being made.

With the secondary group a larger sample over at least a term, with the equivalent of a double period a week would be needed to provide enough scripts to check progress in writing in relation to basic grammatical and stylistic processes. Even then it would be difficult to distinguish development resulting from the methodology from normal improvement and maturation, especially as the two may go hand in hand. These comments, it should be stressed, relate to basic writing skills and probably not to the exploration of more advanced sentence construction or of literary concepts.

One of the many issues arising here and also in the work of the next sample of pupils (from the same class), was the need to educate the good writers who could not draw well in the use of other ways of creating cartoons. It *is* important to stress that copying, even tracing is all right, and if that fails it is possible to resort to cutting out images and shapes to make satisfying pictures.

Though neat, sharp pictures usually have the edge it is also necessary to be aware of relatively scruffy offerings with easily overlooked promise, as in the case for example, of Hazel. Saba's very careful but thoughtfully illustrated story on the other hand, may lack some spontaneity but as previously observed, it is a useful starting point from which to improve her writing techniques and the surface features of her work.

Of the seven, Karen was the most prolific producer of cartoons and she also responded as asked with the cartoon and written halves in the requested order. In *Bugsy* she used her sources particularly well and there may have been helpful autobiographical echoes feeding in too. As her cartoon drawing develops, she shows great facility with visual substitutes for prepositions when making a 'statement'. When she wrote *Our New Roller Boots* she began as instructed with the written section first. I wish I could claim that I had thought through the implications of that instruction but it was just a lucky accident given what the paper of Dixon and Stratta had indicated - namely that it is easier to write from personal experience than to create a totally imaginary text. It may be one reason why her cartoon half was so effective. Vicky, who did hers (My Family) the other way round, struggled. Not what might have been expected from the writer of *Grandad*. Hazel with her *Copy Cat* had produced some very useful work as a draft but again in *My Life Ambition* she shows clearly the difficulty experienced when 'writing' visually about personal experience - she struggles.

It is just worth remembering that *Roller Boots - pt. 2* had no paragraphs but that they reappeared in *Biggy* following her interactive, illustrative form in *Bugsy Goes to the Zoo.* She is a good example of the non-linear development of writing and would have been very interesting to monitor over a much longer period.

At various stages different elements of the surface features were lost, elements she had previously mastered and which were correctly used in subsequent writing, but she was simultaneously developing a visual language for her cartoons. It cannot all be done at once!

Children like Andrew C. are more of a problem - does he perhaps have difficulty with imaging generally? How much does he read? Does he listen? What *does* he like?

By the time the secondary level quasi-experiment was producing work samples, what should have been obvious in the first place could no longer be ignored. The really interesting pieces of cartoon were those somewhere in the middle range of the continuum where alphabetic and visual symbols were becoming interchangeable. That said, those pupils who proffered wholly or almost wholly visual versions also presented work which would have had rich pickings for a subsequent, written text. Those then were the samples from the seven chosen to give a random cross

section of the group's ability levels. What now remained was to examine the work of the rest.

CHAPTER NINE

Exploring the Possibilities

Introduction:

Some of the most interesting work was done by those whom we did not select as part of the original sample and for whom there is no Year Seven narrative writing available for comparison or to indicate development. Despite, as has been repeatedly stressed, the lack of preparation time for this group, the great majority appear to have enjoyed both the actual cartoon drawing and the variety of literature used to stimulate ideas. These pupils produced a great deal of work and most of it done voluntarily at home. Some, like the authors of *Six Feet Under,* began to develop their own techniques and visual syntax.

Informal discussion, regrettably not recorded, suggested that the group as a whole was beginning to think about writing in a different way towards the end, with greater consideration of the whole task before starting. This meant they had a firmer grasp on audience - always a useful conception.

It was becoming still clearer that such a small scale project could only provide hints and indications of what might be achieved. The framework

for analysis was being developed as a heuristic tool as we went along. By this stage in order to see what was happening in the pictorial elements, and aware that lack of drawing ability could be off-putting, the continuum of difficulty had been added and this was combined with a rating for the level of verbal or linguistic interaction with the visual symbols. Each time changes of this nature were made all the earlier scripts had to be revisited.

Problems always hovering in the background tended to become ever more insistent; how for example could it be said that progress was as a direct result of the methodology and not a consequence of normal maturation? This was further complicated by the knowledge of the complexities of measuring writing performance. For all that, such examples as emerged seemed to indicate an accelerated rate of learning in the outlined areas. Absolute proof just is not possible in educational research but experience suggested that the approach was right.

It should be noted that the examination of further texts in this chapter from this same banded group means that the samples will be weighted heavily towards the girls because quite simply there were more many girls than boys.

Year Eight: The Additional Cartoons

Suzanne	*The Secret Diary of Donald Lee Fraser - aged 41/2* 3c
	The Rottweiller that wasn't Ferocious 2a?b *Heads Off* 3c
Kate S.	*Vege Carrots* 2b *The Diary of Eric the ½ a Bee* 3c
	Shopping for Jeans
	Murder of the Mind
Kate L.	(Yr. 7 written script -Magnet attracts Iron Man)
	Abigale 4b *Spigle* 4c
Andrew G.	*Vanilla Ice Kid* 3a *Tommy Gun* 3a
Peter L.	*Killer Ducks from Outer Space* 3b *Snow* 2a
Adikuor	*Blib* 3b

The Cartoons:

The Secret Diary of Donald Lee Fraser aged 4 ½ - Suzanne

Suzanne was one of the contributors who was not selected in the original test group because the only year seven work of hers that could be found was a brochure advertising the school and not therefore narrative writing. That document however, was filled with diagram and illustration, a pointer, had we but known it, to her strength and interest in graphic work. Much of

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what will be looked at was prepared in school by her but taken home to execute.

The model for *The Secret Diary of Donald Lee Fraser - aged 4 1/2* is all too obvious but this was her first attempt. The drawing is not so polished as in some of the examples shown later but it serves its purpose. See for example how one hand holds the pen while the arm partially conceals the 'secret' diary. The authorial viewpoint is really handled rather well through this central character in her story.

She knows too how to make humour work for her and exploits the incongruous - just take the title and then top left- 5p! The clipped note-like style is the right register for the occasion. There are a few spelling errors and the odd punctuation mark is missing but the basics are sound. Toto is presumably tutu while espadrilles are quite beyond the pale.

On pages two and three the viewpoint is clearly in evidence again. Donald is peeping over the top of the four displayed frames and holding them together. If evidence from a younger group had appeared to suggest that only boys were into advertising in a big way then these girls, admittedly slightly older, gave every sign that the right shirt bore the 'in' slogan. Note also Donald's feet. Not for nothing that this school hit the BBC news over the cost of trainers.

Yes this image of a figure peeping over the top (usually a wall) has been done before; it is almost a visual cliché but this is a secret diary and therefore it is highly appropriate that Donald should keep an eye on it. Moreover, just look at frame ten. It is not especially well drawn but cognitively it is all there - or rather it is not. Part of the title and part of the map are shown.

On arrival at frame eleven Donald has what seems to me to be an enormous breakfast for a four and a half year old, though maybe he has not had anything to eat since Tuesday. Perhaps it just unintentionally reflects the preferred meal of the author? It is interesting that in frames nine and twelve Donald informs his reader using the accusative form of the personal pronoun and it serves as a timely reminder that our hero is not very old. The focalizing through Donald is not as subtle as the cited example of Pip from *Great Expectations* but it is not a bad start.

In this chapter where the narratives are predominantly cartoons some interesting variations are emerging on the narrator-focalizer theme. Rimmon-Kenan is reluctant to use the term authorial 'point of view' in her study, because of its specifically visual connotations but in relation to this kind of work it can only be seen as particularly apposite.

It is quite difficult to place this piece on the continuum with its high interactive factor of (c). Although at first glance this looks like a cartoon at

level 4, Donald tells the story in the first person with his illustrations highlighting what he sees as the key points. Two of the frames actually contain only written text and the final page has a frame which offers a summary so that in spite of its physical shape, the narrative line seems closer to 3. The pictures are used to complete the story giving information in respect of appearance (measles) and actions but the more complex ideas are expressed verbally. (See for example the first frame on Wednesday - 6.)

The Rottweiller that wasn't Ferocious - Suzanne

Happy to make use of any available source, she turns to the press with *The Rottweiller that wasn't Ferocious* since man-eating dogs were very topical at the time together with irresponsible owners who neglected their pets.

She has quite skilfully welded both elements into an imaginative, if anthropomorphic tale, but this time she has a narrator. The first page has four frames with a symbolic rather than a pictorial or strictly representational function since the captions actually unfold the story line. The caption at the top of frame three is misplaced and results in a temporary loss of cohesion; it should, like the line in frame two, have been inside the square.

What is presented here is an illustrated story but, as in the first narrative, the drawings are not a simple retelling in visual terms, they add to and interact with the plot. The continuation also uses a little imagery, although as

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Jasper has a halo, the choice seems somewhat inappropriate as a reflection of .... "a bad streak came out on him".. when he turns to a life of crime. It emerges as just an illustrated story, 2, with selected symbols occasionally adding to the plot but with a rather low level of interaction - (a) touching (b) once or twice perhaps?

The second half has then been written as per instructions although she has added that pair of illustrations to help link it to part one. It is noticeable how many of the youngsters managed to infiltrate some additional illustrative response into the written section whichever order the pieces were composed in, thus effecting visual as well as contextual cohesion even though at no time was this officially suggested to them.

Heads Off - Suzanne

The clear enthusiasm Suzanne has shown for design work is present too in the last example of this sort, an incident from her life called *Heads Off*, planned in February and finally finished in March. She wrote the story first in her notebook and then produced a series of six frames to accompany it. The end result of the picture story A, is not a cartoon narrative but it does not constitute a traditional illustrated narrative when combined with the writing either. The written version could stand alone; the first illustrated draft could not because there are just too many occasions where the artist has left too big a gap for the reader to fill. Despite the care with the illustrative detail, the overall concept is not too secure and she obviously

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re-read the page and appended "Read this first." in an attempt to clarify its message.

The dual version of part one exists because the original was lost and then later rediscovered; the second was done from memory and there are several small but interesting differences, some of which improve the cohesion.

In A and B the first picture is roughly the same and conveys nearly the same information. The calendar is a bold image with an unambiguous message. However in B there is uncertainty as to authorial voice as the writer becomes a 'visible' narrator, a participant focalizer as the sister of Leanne.

A2 and B2 are similar but complementary, c arrying messages which are all too familiar from the world of commerce. Neither frame four works very well and it is puzzling that Leanne is visually exophoric in both, though the story line is more distinct in B. Again in frame five (A and B) there is a disembodied voice as there is in six. I don't think 'the Dad' is a third spelling of Mainwaring, she is too young to have seen and appreciated the series.

Curiously there is a close-up of Leanne, especially in version A, but the only 'visual' impression we have of the "amazing doll" is from the written text. To

glean the full picture you need all three drafts and the pictorial element is present in one way or another in them all.

In the written piece, the first paragraph - and she usually handles the paragraphs quite well - combines two or possibly three sentences without any punctuation. Since she copied them out exactly onto paper from her book she must have felt that they were contextually inseparable (lines 1-5).

As before there is good conscious use of symbolism, much of which could promote greater depth in the writing. Although there is again straight chronology as the organising principle, a little encouragement might persuade her to 'translate' the manner in which she utilises visual imagery to expand her concepts and to slow the narrative pace when she writes. With a classification of 3 on the continuum despite the difficulties she has encountered when welding the various parts of the story together, there is a great deal 'happening' between the cartoon and the written text so she scores highly in relation to the interactive factor -(c).

Vege Carrots - Kate S

The next writer, Kate S. reveals a decidedly violent and macabre turn of mind for such an apparently gentle child. Perhaps her initial cartoon *The Vege Carrots* written for younger children was a suppressed desire for revenge on vegetarian family members?

Gardner's 'literal phase' with no real emergence of metaphor may be an accurate description in relation to the use of actual figures of speech but when they are encouraged to play with words and invent puns, most children seem to respond with alacrity. Kate is no exception and moreover, the opening cast list shows her drawing on books and television for her leading 'carroters'. She offers us Jester Minuet, (which I suspect should have read 'Minute', spelling is not always her strong suit) who must have his origins in Jasper Carrot, Humpty Thumpty, whose masculine nature is surely one of the strangest perversions of the nursery world, King Song, who is hairy with gorilla-like arms, and so on. Some of the source material is consciously borrowed, though some may not be, as when Pinocchio the pet log gets in on the act bearing a passing resemblance to Thomas the Tank Engine.

Despite strong visual messages, the author worries that the full implications of her title page will not be understood and so, before starting on part two, there is a double page spread to supplement it where the written description too appeals to the reader's visual sense. It is about the equivalent of level 2 and although part two is markedly less successful there is interaction here in part one at about (b).

At this point Kate launches into a story designed for young children, and, which unexpectedly and incongruously includes pixies. Her style of drawing changes too, becoming much less specific as the carrots indulge

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in acts of gratuitous violence which entail eating the Cabbage family. It is as though she has created the characters first and then tried to write a story to fit them. As regards the surface features of her work, she is aware of the need for inverted commas and mostly gets them right but paragraphs go by the wayside.

The Secret Diary of Eric the-½-a-Bee -Kate S

Successful or not, Kate likes these imaginative excursions and abandons aggressive vegetables for insects. The Vege Carrots imported source material from her reading and television and in *The Diary of...Eric the-half-a bee* she extends this to information from the 'world-out-there'. Hippies it seems, to this class, are still a very potent image of peace and tranquillity. Thus when accidentally battered by a long-haired pacifist Eric, having seen the half of himself which still existed in a tiny scrap of mirror, is placed in a sort of bee haven cum sanatorium. There, surrounded with flowers, he recuperates sipping Lucozade and Coco Cola.

A kind of 'double thinks' device provides an anaphoric reference to an earlier moment (it can be done) and at the bottom of the bubble is the hippy warning our Eric about the nasty propensity of human kind to swipe at things which fly with rolled up newspapers. The point of the next frame (Sat. 6th August) is not very easy to discern but it may be a comment on the almost medieval living pattern of people in this alternative society. In

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the frame which follows (seven), the writer is firmly back on course showing a Venus Fly trap with sharp white teeth.

Eric, still the narrator, patiently waiting for the trap to open, shares his thoughts with us. In one sense the diary format functions solely as a vehicle to explain the day by day revelation of events. Within it the form is almost stream of consciousness with little or no concession to the diary. In some ways therefore it is less sophisticated than *The Secret Diary of Donald Lee Fraser* where the syntax is truncated at times to give the impression of note form.

Nonetheless as a piece of genuinely imaginative writing it moves quite readily into the area of faction. Take Tuesday for instance where, bright enough to remember that spiders have webs, although attracted to Milly's .. "lovely pair of legs, pair of legs, pair of legs" (it is possible to 'see' his head moving back and forth as the legs go past), he remembers how dangerous she is and squeezes out between the teeth.

Apparently he emerges as fragments and as "Eric-the-in-lots-of-Eric the half a bee segments-bee", retreats for imagined safety into the flower bed and meets an unknown and terrible end. Once more the final scream has a visual and decorative quality supplying another anaphoric link.

Any doubts which I might have had concerning children's ability to communicate effectively in a visual format, and many of the early

examples relied on the written captions to do this for them, were dispelled by Kate's *Eric* and also *Spigle*. She has moved quite a long way from Suzanne's primitive use of hearts and tears. Even the simple motif of a question mark when combined with the image of a damaged Eric and a mirror suggests complete bewilderment and shock and the humour of the "dead room" is established largely through the imagery. With the narrative form at level 3, the interaction is quite strong, I think (c) in the first part, while the written diary continues the theme of strikingly visual images.

Shopping for Jeans - Kate S

Shopping for Jeans is worth a brief mention because she picks a personal incident this time which in essence is intensely visual. The first half is cartoon related in full cartoon form. There is the occasional narrative comment but visual metaphors abound. One of the best occurs in frame one where Kate has excelled herself graphically and the light bulb inside the 'thinks' bubble is lighting up Mom's fear of what she'll have to shell out if she takes the 'imp' shopping. The interactive factor is working well here and borrowed source material is welded into her own ideas.

Part two with no paragraphs and a fair sprinkling of spelling mistakes is written quite neatly considering that it is on unlined paper. The story is good and races along, though the connectives are rather primitive ('so's and 'and's proliferate), with very little embedding.

Murder of the Mind - Kate S (wholly written script)

The real surprise came when unprompted she produced yet another story, this time with no cartoons. *Murder of the Mind* begins by beckoning the reader into the text to share the revelations.

"My story starts in a sacluded area, far away from any living being, in a land where only the darkest thing survive in the darkest places, a place where lightning cracks and no greenery survives the harsh rain of the cold night;" She is becoming much more sophisticated in the way she writes, taking her audience into consideration and exploiting narrative voice. The tale itself is prefaced with an abstract which prepares the reader for the type of tale which is to follow, offering guidance as to how the story should be read.

Labov in *Language in the Inner City* said, long ago, that middle class speakers gave their "evaluative comments more force by attributing them to a neutral observer", and here, instinctively, Kate has done just that.

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Greater complexity of sentence structure is in evidence together with such devices as the rhetorical question, again consciously addressing her readers.....

"So what happened when Mr. Shaw was let out, I hear you ask?" ... even though her spelling is fallible and she has misreported one or two colloquialisms. I particularly like "crumbled to the floor".

After reading all Kate's cartoon and illustrated stories it is interesting to speculate as to how much of the technique here in this last written narrative is foreshadowed in the earlier works. From *The Vege Carrots* on, where friends and staff with vegetarian leanings may well be the source of inspiration, she has proved very capable when bringing knowledge of current happenings and ethos and blending it successfully with her fiction. In the Carrots cartoon the authorial voice addressing the reader is prefigured in her lengthy character descriptions before the action starts.

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Even in *Shopping for Jeans*, where the narrator, by contrast with her psychological thriller, is quite

straightforwardly Kate herself, she remembers to share some of her thought processes with us. Together with some graphic description, despite spelling and punctuation errors, she creates a different but equally vivid picture.

> ...but, I thought It needs Some thing else Something witty on the back of my trousers, Soumthing big - so I got a pot of flourecent orange paint and tipped all over my hand and I slapped #the# my hand down on the bum part of the trousers.

Magnet Attracts Iron Man - Kate L

Kate L. whose work we see next, was one of the pupils for whom we also had a fairly long piece of writing from year seven which is included here to give an indication of her earlier achievement. *Her Magnet Attracts Iron Man* begins promisingly with a pun but never quite achieves the subtleties of her classmate, Esther. It is nonetheless writing which also has a very visual character and she presented it with a large, black initial letter on a shaded pink ground.

Most of the time there is evidence of an ability to paragraph and spell competently using quite complex structures with deliberate alteration of clausal order to gain emphasis when necessary. When she does not know the right word she invents it .....

> Unknown to the capturies there were two eyes whatching them, these eyes belonged to a lady this lady was made of iron.... and later ... and there in the bushes they saw the Iron-lady.

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She may have missed the possible play on the title of the then Prime Minister but she did not miss the opportunity to poke fun at her central characters in the subsequent love scene. The Iron man has developed as a character in ways Ted Hughes has not dreamed of!

> "Magnet!' cried I. M. "my heart throb, my sweet heart, my love, I thought you had been melted down in to nothing by Jardess I...
> "I'd love to talk darling, but hadn't we better escape first?"

Iron Man is almost a James Bond figure, an impression underscored by the last paragraph too -

> ...yes it was another job well done thought IM as he lit the candles and got ready for a romantic dinner for two.

The possibility that the 'strange force' (l.42) was the 'Magnet' was not dispelled until the paragraph beginning on line 81, when it became clear that it/she was a person, machine or iron lady! Again the political implications of this might have been exploited; some of her classmates would undoubtedly have played with the notion.

Abigale - Kate L

However, what Kate does revel in, is visual presentation; for one thing she is a graphic artist of some skill, possessing a strong design sense and secondly she is very aware of the power of symbols generally. To appreciate this we need look no further than the second frame in her story *Abigale.*

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The first section has only two 'thinks' or speech bubbles, both of which are extremely amusing. Abigale is a baby doll blonde but unless Kate has seen Peter Pan recently it is hard to see why our heroine should be being made to walk the plank. Is the prince in league with pirates enabling him to check out potential partners as they drop to the sea bed?

As in all good fairy tales, fantastic things happen. This is no wilting, rotting corpse but a transmogrified, beautiful mermaid suffering amnesia or, in the author's words, loss of "memrey". Quite why this makes her "a nicer and caring person" is not stated (it is another lapse in coherence) but perhaps the reader is expected to infer from her image, from the concern for her hair, from attention to details of dress- her eye shadow matches her frock- that Abigale is too bound up with the material things of life. As a story intended for younger children, the ending leaves open the possibility of further adventures whilst at the same time conferring the security of marital felicity!

> She got on well with her husband and unknown to both of them they were to lead an extraordinary life...[as if she had not already]....But that's another story!

The cartoon section classifies as 4 on the continuum with only the barest of comments and rates (b) for interaction. Though there is a linking between the picture and written halves with colour and imagistic detail, coherence and cohesion is somewhat lacking throughout.

The Diary of Spigle the Spider - Kate L

The Diary of Spigle the Spider, easily one of the best stories and her next offering, is yet another tale in diary format - a popular suggestion perhaps because it does make textual organisation so simple. The drawings are splendid with a diagrammatic simplicity. The initial picture and its little puff of steam, directional lines, drops of sweat and relieved verbalised "eek" tell the whole story with no further need for captions. In the frame for the following day we see that Spigle is still very upset and his tears are those of self pity because of the constant terror and threat imposed by human arachnophobes with newspapers and/or big feet.

The joy and relief etched on Spigle's face when he has obviously made a decision to sell up is augmented by the image of him bouncing up and down on his thread. It is short lived. The next instant the perky little arachnid has the smile wiped from his face with a feather duster and despite a soft landing in the laundry basket he looks frightened not tickled.

Frame six beats television any day. So simple but really very clever; the one word Hotpoint is synonymous with washing machine and Spigle is drawn upside down. Obvious? Yes, but how much less effective it would have been had he been the right way up.

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The cohesion is superb and the drawing formulaic but excellent. She repeats the 'rapid-exit' formula in the next illustration where the speech bubble's "Oh no" just adds that touch of exasperation or desperation, though Kate's tidiness of drawing might, if she really irons socks, conceal a hint of the manic?

Frame eight is delightful providing one of the best uses made of visual metaphor. The flower-power peace movement from the sixties sets the scene. Hippies love "everything" and Spigle's thought bubble shows his hopes are high. Poor Spigle - he has become established firmly now as a loveable, misunderstood victim of society and even the sandalled toe is against him. Then the light dawns...! It is again such basic symbolism but so impressive.

Ultimately the only difficulty occurred in the very last frame and it took several moments before the significance of the hovering shape above Spigle and his new-found mate's heads dawned. It is of course - how could I not have understood - a plug hole.

Apart from the successive dates marking the frames there is very little annotation, though such as there is carries a great deal of information because it is tightly linked with the drawings. This was the closest that most came to pure narrative drawing. The pictures actually build the story line - frame one with movement from under the foot and frame 2's tears or

sweat (there is slight ambiguity but either emotion, fear or sorrow, could be appropriate). The 'For Sale' sign then needs no written explanation. Thus *Spigle* classifies as 4, so nearly 5, and for interaction (c) because although there are very few verbal symbols to interact with, there is tacit interaction and the syntax of the visual narrative works well.

The Vanilla Ice Kid - Andrew G

Andrew G put quite a lot of effort into the visual approach and since comics and the pop world interest him they are both reflected as source material here. It seems fair to say, on admittedly limited evidence, that the kinds of literature and film used as background stimulus did not appeal to the boys in the group or at least it was not material which seemed to be readily interpreted in any way as a resource for their cartoons. It may well be harder to find reading matter in an English lesson which really appeals equally to both sexes than it is to bridge the ability gap.

What a shame the second half of *Vanilla Ice Kid* is not here as evidence because there are a number of important questions raised by the imagery in the cartoon. Has the Kid, for instance, made money illegally so far? Is the Bank of England a symbol for the riches he would like to possess?

In frame two the caption is necessary because the perspective is misleading but the imagery is mostly clear. Vanilla Ice Kid has his heart set

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on money, whereas his companions are concentrating on relations with the opposite sex, as witness the heart in the rear windscreen. With whom is the girl in love though?

Ice's problem solving technique is intriguing:- "But Ice had some problems to solve, some big problem." Asked if he was coming to a party he replies that he has no time, he has to wash the car. Is this the male equivalent of 'I'm washing my hair'? Certainly the purpose of your life is a big, big question, however what the Kid actually does do is not quite the excessively violent sexual activity suggested in frame six. That was after all a spelling error!

Frame seven may not be beautifully drawn but it delivers the message of the fans frenetic activity and hero worship. Only the title itself shows that Andrew is 'into' the type of lettering so beloved of young graffito artists. "Vanilla Ice" may not be original but it is a useful borrowing to help build the 'cool' persona for his posse-forming venture in the last frame. Part two never appeared and the story's mode of presentation thus far puts it at 3 on the continuum and the interaction with the captions is quite low level, so (a).

Tommy Gun - Andrew G

Tommy Gun may also be a second-hand title. It similarly achieves level 3, but has (b) for interaction with very much the comic book style, though rather thin narrative thread since Andrew concentrates more on trying to

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create jokes in his text. The violence in it is very much a part of the comic/video world of slick, incredible, macho characters. *There is in this* instance only cartoon text and sufficient interaction with the written captions to merit (b) this time.

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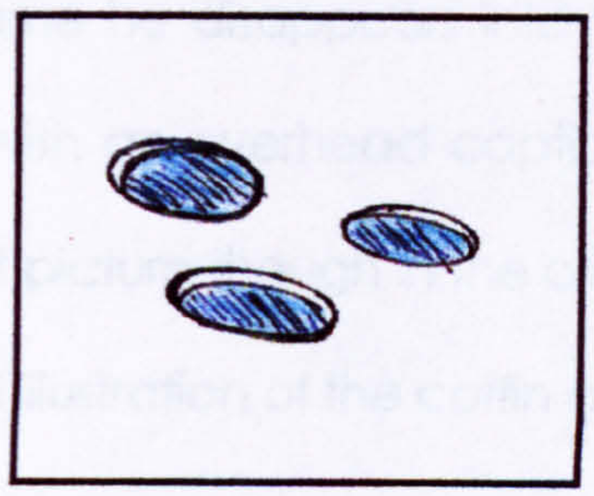

If this were taken seriously it would be an extremely sick little tale but the whole story is so fantastic it must be seen as a joke. The very first frame stresses this intention. Tommy Gun, the workaholic, is working very *hard - to shoot* everyone. 'Dad' is full of holes, but cartoon, cardboard cut-out holes *created by the formula in (1), and he is then hung up on a board* resembling stocks.

After that it is the turn of a noisy baby and its mother who are blown apart with bazookas, while the police car in the background with its "COP 1" number plate is next in line for eradication. Just what 'mother' is saying perhaps does not really bear too close an inspection! Tommy Gun's whole life style is destructive, intentionally and unintentionally. The wagon he drives (which could be Japanese but is probably American) squashes a frog as it goes.

However those who live by the sword... A modified Desperate Dan with a Mohican hair style creeps up on the unsuspecting, relaxed and whistling Tommy (note the symbols for music plus the expression and question mark, all of which say purely pictorially how surprised he is) and dispenses immediate and rough justice. Is his motive revenge? We are not told. In the last frame he disappears into the distance down a long flattened grass track with an overhead caption preparing for the next instalment. This is the last picture though in the original drawing it is possible to see a partially erased illustration of the coffin at his funeral.

Killer Ducks from Outer Space - Peter

Peter did not seem tremendously keen on the act of writing and he took a long time to produce any work. When he did it was a cartoon Sci Fi with the obligatory macho element, *Killer Ducks from Outer Space*. The ducks themselves are a variant on Disney type characters. Only two views are presented, full frontal and side view from the right. Whatever his source it seems to have offered difficulties with the body so that no tail or webbed feet can be seen. Perhaps after the rather unconvincing wing in frame 4 he became discouraged, even though as a feature, it helped the comic inadequacy of the killer image. The wavy line on the duck's beak in the last frame is the one effective individual touch, reminiscent as it is of that zigzag mouth given to Andy Capp's wife when he has said or done something more than usually cruel and which conveyed all the conflicting emotions of disappointment, anger and sheer misery. The cartoon is

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classified at 3(b) but with the rider that the continuance from part one to part two is secure allowing interaction between the two sections.

In the cartoon half there is no attempt at anything other than straight chronology and very little else in the written sequel, though perhaps the clause which begins on line ten shows an awareness of simultaneous happenings recorded, as they must be, sequentially. The coda is brief and to the point but not a very satisfactory as an ending since no sense of tension is built up. Its greatest strength would seem to be in a well developed sense of the absurd. Exploiting that and helping him improve the surface features of his text could be the way to convince him that there might after all be something in this writing business.

Snow - Peter

His autobiographical sketch *Snow* is another piece which underlines the differing narrative interests of the two sexes and the strong constraints which appear to be operating on what the boys will take on board as narrative. It is called *Snow* but the content is about football. Peter is not a natural illustrator but he has tried quite hard -see frame two with everyone "in line"! It is hard to fit within the framework since it does not quite make level 3 but has more drawings than were anticipated for 2 and there is not much interaction except for his pun regarding the bag which merits (b) rather than the overall (a) for the rest.

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Once more this piece would lend itself to easy correction of some of his punctuation problems, while frame five for example, would allow ready expansion of the potential paragraph on the Adidas bag. There might even be a way to translate his pun 'Adinaff' into a written text without losing its spontaneity.

Blib - Adikuor

Not all the Science Fiction produced by the group was the work of the boys and Adikuor's *The Adventures of Blib* was one of the texts looked at by members of a LINC conference. Some interesting comments were made by a teacher there who regrettably did not leave a name so that it is not possible to acknowledge him or her fully.

In respect of the visual half, the initial observation was that the use of the 'blob' freed the artist "from the constraints of artistic ability" but that there was sufficient flexibility to convey non-verbal messages in the facial expression. That last aspect was a factor which, once again, like the use of 'easy shapes', through lack of time, it had not been possible to stress sufficiently but which those with instinctive ability in this area worked through for themselves.

The use of personal experience is noted; a bedroom and definitely earth-like environment, not to mention the book on Earth exploration upside

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down for ease of reading. Who says we aren't a literate culture any more? The setting is noted by the LINC teacher however, almost as though it were a negative contribution indicating lack of imagination, whereas actually it could be seen as a very sensible way to begin to extend a narrative in otherwise uncharted waters. Thinking of the models of adult Science Fiction and indeed the need to consider the reader, to write such a story in any other way would be a Herculean task.

The LINC critic, understanding that Blib was a 'home bird' felt that the "sophisticated concept" being explored in the cartoon section of the need for young people to fly the nest, was somehow lost in the connections between the two parts of the story but found interesting the relation between "I want to go home" in the visual story and the last line of the (written) narrative. S/he also commented that the cleverly developed characterisation in the first half petered out in the second. In fairness the characters had been established and the writer was concerned to promote the plot. The written narrative under the strip is firm and concise at level 3 and the important information offered through the drawings gives us (b) for interaction.

What was useful here was the confirmation that there were narrative processes noted by an independent observer which were happening in both approaches to story giving a positive base. That is to say it offers a positive achievement, something the pupil has done well, to start from.

Meanwhile the critic, quite unsolicited, had felt that using a simple visual formula meant that the need to draw extremely well was unnecessary.

Summary:

There was only one sample of work from Year Seven (Kate L.'s) for the pupils referred to in this chapter so six of them had automatically not been available for selection but their work proved so interesting that they were included in the analysis. They showed great keenness for the task and revealed a surprising strength in graphic approaches.

Despite obvious keenness for this mode of expression no one quite explored the medium to the extent of Karen in the previous chapter although the development of Kate L.'s work comes close. There are parts of her *Magnet attracts Iron Man* which do not make a wholly unambiguous narrative. That lack of coherence is reflected in the brief story of *Abigale* whatever its undoubted strengths. Though there are slight weaknesses in the spelling, she has a fair vocabulary and not being able to spell a word does not deter her from using it, while her understanding of most aspects of the textual and narrative requirements of an imaginative, and therefore more difficult, piece is good. When she produces *Spigle* she achieves a remarkable level of cohesion with the minimum of linguistic markers. It would have been good to ask her to compare what she had achieved in this, the last of her cartoons, with her earlier written story or,

better still, with a slightly more recent piece since she was one of the pupils for whom there was Year Seven evidence.

I suspect that Peter L. could have been tempted into writing at more than his usual length by using *Killer Ducks* in conjunction with some short satirical stories[1] and Andrew G. might possibly have gone for something in a similar vein but perhaps also reflecting a similar style to that of Andrew Chr. (*The Raid*).

What they are all beginning, or in some cases continuing to do, both girls and boys, is to make good use of other book, film or television sources plus observations from real life to weld detail into otherwise purely fictional accounts. They are moving quite rapidly away from the need to have an autobiographical base in order to produce effective narrative writing. Though they are still showing signs of their age level, their work, in a rather difficult area often looks more promising than many a Year Eleven attempt for GCSE.

The source material used for the drawing is beginning to feed back into the writing. Of course it might be argued that this kind of development could have occurred anyway because there were several bright youngsters whose use of humour and irony was strongly present in their

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[1] Hacker, G., Learmonth, J., & Robinson, R., inside stories, perhaps?)

earlier written work. However in the writing it remained the province of a few, there simply is not the level of sharing and discussion that took place with the cartoons - limited time available or not. Cartooning really does seem to promote collaboration, a genuine zone of proximal development.

CHAPTER TEN

Where next?

Introduction

This attempt to establish a programme for writing and cartoons outlined in the earlier chapters has been frustratingly brief. There are therefore, and they will be revisited at this point, some very interesting aspects and issues which indicate all kinds of possibilities and lines for further research. Most of the later cartoon versions produced by the children urgently needed discussion, expansion and translation into a written response with further detailed analysis to determine the progress made. That we literally ran out of time means that the real potential for writing development remained largely unrealised.

By no means all the ideas we write about are primarily visual but in personal and imaginative writing, the details which develop it and add verisimilitude quite often are; drafting visually can help enormously here. When however, two interrelated or analytic or focussed components result in the creation of a third metaphoric one, the 'seeing anew' has used both syncretistic and analytic thought. All these factors are involved in treating the written or drawn text as an object or message to be improved;

this is an overview in itself . It is also important to remember that the actual structure of the text develops too. Expressing verbal thought in images and creating cohesive features like prepositions in a visual format requires a firm grasp or overview of what you are doing - demonstrates metacognitive awareness.

At this point the chapter will be divided into three broad areas. The first is concerned with the interaction of the differing kinds of symbol and ways in which this may affect the thought processes. The second attempts to summarise the transferable features from visual to verbal text and vice versa, showing how this may assist in normal classroom work operating on the surface features of writing, especially aspects of punctuation. The third is concerned with how such teaching methods can help to develop a much wider concept of the development of narrative including its structure and ordering.

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1: Symbols and Imagery in thought - the interactive factor

The first section deals with the ways in which visual materials can assist children to think more syncretistically and how metaphor, given its imagistic nature, can help. Some aspects of the cartoons are revisited to see how the exchange of verbal and visual symbols results in improved understanding of the writing process.

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When ways in which children think are examined, the need for an ability to alter focus, that is to say, alternately to scan, to stand back and take an overview and to think analytically, can be seen as essential to enable proper cognitive growth. In *Six Feet Under* the whole of the title page is one expanded metaphor and the title itself exudes the violence of the gun-toting Wild West - bullet holes, burial and the turned up toes of Boot Hill. Witness this lovely interaction of word and image before the team even started to use schemata from comic strip or television. This cartoon was the starting point for the investigation because it arose as a

result of an interdisciplinary enterprise with the visual element in particular seeming to encourage written achievement.

There was the suggestion of considerable metacommunicative ability here when these pupils worked together. The visual planning and the humour which cartoon encouraged resulted in a much longer and more imaginative written sequel than usual from one of their number. Though basic writing skills were poor, the thinking which had gone into it was fairly effectively recorded and shows a sense of having appreciated what was wanted. More evidence was needed to discover what actually happened, whether this was just because of a simple transference of ideas and whether there were any other beneficial effects.

The cross curricular work done in both secondary and primary schools for this research sprang from a belief in the importance of subject interaction because it could lead so much more readily to situations allowing symbolic interaction in the classroom. Considering the priority of vision in our senses it seems strange just how we neglect the visual aspect of children's knowledge, particularly when we have become, as a culture, so dependent on the visual media.

The economy of the visual medium gives it tremendous flexibility as a teaching tool. For one thing it can prove a very handy 'aide memoire'.

> Concrete nouns and pictures are effective pegs for storage and retrieval of associated information.[1]

And again...

> Things can be put together in various ways in a meaningful image, but words do not enjoy the same freedom in sentences.[2]

Add to this the way in which a picture can be scanned (unlike words, which need to be considered meaningfully and sequentially and are usually part of a process which takes longer than the scanning of an image or images) and the economy of a cartoon story allows marvellous, rapid access to an overview of a variety of concepts which children may need to explore.

Moreover it is worth considering that, since it is difficult to make a distinction between memory and knowledge, using visual forms makes something more memorable.[3] Retrieval is a greater problem of course than storage. Flavell lists the processes involved: storage entails attending to, encoding, memorizing and studying, while retrieval means recognizing, recalling and reconstructing, that is to say 'remembering' what has been stored. At one stage further removed, metamemory involves knowing what it is that is hard to remember and understanding that if an input has little meaning for an individual it will be hard to store adequately and retrieve. Put another

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[1] Paivio, A., in Ortony, A., Metaphor and Thought, (1979, p.168)

[2] Ibid., 167

[3] Flavell, J.H., Cognitive Development, 185

Memory in the wider sense where a specific thing is remembered and all other items of the same ilk which gives a stored cognitive scheme.

way, 'what the 'head' knows has an enormous effect on what the 'head learns and remembers." [4]

Other features of the experimental design that we devised raised difficulties. Indeed the very concept of cartoon narratives could be seen as problematic if we take Susanne Langer's statements to heart.

> Causal connections, activities, time and change are what we want most of all to conceive and communicate. And to this end pictures are poorly suited.[5]

The point at issue here though, is that partly because of this, children are forced into thinking more carefully how to convey their ideas and the value of that need to rethink in different symbolic forms. It must be remembered too that the narrative cartoon is a different animal from the single work of art.

Bearing in mind the continuum of illustrated story through to pure cartoon, more evidence is needed to confirm just how helpful as a tool to assist writing a completely pictorial version of a story would be. I think it would be valuable simply on the grounds of the level of thought and abstraction necessary to reach that stage and also for the reason that to be capable of producing such a version surely indicates deeper understanding of how texts work. Even with the resultant, simple, illustrated texts of the earlier

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[4] Ibid., 189

[5] Langer, S., Philosophy in a New Key, (1978, p.73)

levels, there is the possibility of using them to improve the imaginative and descriptive qualities of the writing. Given a written text plus a straightforwardly representational but complementary picture one, writing can be helped in respect of such aspects as punctuation, (inverted commas, sentence structure, parts of speech and paragraphing) plus some aspects of grammar.

In the original instructions given, the class was asked to write one half and to complete the tale with a cartoon and then try again using the reverse order of construction. That method was devised in an optimistic attempt to see what, if anything, transferred from one half to the other. Quite obviously some things did, but what it did not do, and of course could not, was to show what long term benefits might derive from working with cartoons as a drafting mode in this way. The only clues which emerged there were when, unprompted, children took books home and continued to write. One example was *Murder of the Mind*, a piece brimming with 'visual' imagery and also (though I have only the memory of the initial cartoon) Andrew's lengthy story *The Raid*. In the main the evidence suggested that the pupils saw the two halves of those early creations as so closely linked that they used reciprocal icons or patterns to make this visually obvious. As rule the written section was quite short; they did not often have the opportunity legitimately to draw cartoons in class.

Six Feet Under was packed with visual symbols, underlining clearly the economy of vision and the format reveals the beginnings of visual syntax. While some of the items borrowed for the story are well known clichés, not all come into this category and the arrows and organisation offer an effective pictorial grammar. Metaphorical usage emerges to further the humour in the written section. Remember "Come on Pete - dive in."?

The author of *Stealing Oil* in the same group, might not have been able to draw too well but she could invent her own metaphors and what is more she mixed a verbal and visual format in her example. Her Wild West response was set in the twentieth century and J.R. was pinched from *Dallas*. The resultant joke works in a way which corresponds to Taylor's five basic propositions[6]. There is a cartoon of the primary subject, the car, while the secondary subject, the stage coach arrives in the commentary with its implicative complex of associations evoking the lawless West. Dallas with its complement of morally dodgy characters, money and oil, together with J. R's horse, all help to provide a second complex to interact with the first.

In short, the drawings and the stories may be somewhat primitive but the interactive processes which are occuring are often of a very complex nature and those processes can be related to (a) the association of ideas resulting in some kind of metaphoric creation, or (b) the conveyance of

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[6] Taylor, W., Ed., Metaphors of Education, 5-6

straightforward, additional information, or (c) a symbolic representation of a visual syntax.

My interest in metaphor was not just an intriguing diversion. If metaphor is "striking evidence of abstractive seeing", then children who use it are at quite an advanced level of thinking. After looking at the variety of attempts to describe metaphor's effectiveness in writing, and indeed in speaking, the importance of its function for the educationist begins to emerge in the work of Paivio who shows how it can take the learner gently from an understood and familiar feature into unknown territory. It can give shape to ideas which may initially be ineffable allowing them to be embraced without words - the insight of metaphor.

Moreover metaphor in its strongest form, the creative metaphor, gives expression to wholly new concepts, the force of its comparison creating something completely different. Its form is actually an encouragement of both syncretistic and analytic thinking. It has its own visual element even if this does not *"spill over"* into conscious imagery. Paivio's dual coding has the two components of metaphor with both verbal associative and imagistic mechanisms operating independently and co-operatively, both equally essential to language and thought.

When we add to this the research which suggests that verbal conditions which encourage image arousal (Katz and Paivio) also facilitate concept discovery, the interactive power of metaphor must surely be worth

tapping into. In that it is the interactivity which triggers new ideas we are considering here more than just the literary trope and its visual equivalence, we need to embrace and apply the way in which metaphors work.

The visual, the perceptual quality of metaphor is the facilitator of other more complex modes of thought. Metaphor can free us from uni-dimensional thinking and visual metaphor perhaps more so. Most young people are aware of symbolic aspects of colour and its links with mood. Intuitively they sense "the splashing over of impressions from one sense modality to another,"[7] and know that in the world of the mind, shapes and colours can stand for feeling. Curiously the otherwise hard, materialistic world of advertising has fostered this.

Iconicity is the basis of the visual image. The representational 'bit' is the artist holding tightly onto the referential plane and the pressure of modern life actually pushes prose this direction too since so much of it demands writing for specific informational or functional purposes. Children's understanding or knowledge when working in the superstructure, the metaphorical level, the realm of metacognition, is a very exciting area to explore.

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[7] Gombrich, E.H., Art and Illusion, 310

Once the visual aspect of thought is accepted, the way is opened to more than discursive forms as legitimate modes of thinking. The next stage is to create an environment in which children feel free to experiment. In any context perception is much more than simply seeing - it is necessarily a form of abstraction. Thus the perception theories visited in the fourth chapter are about increased discrimination. They are concerned with how children learn to abstract and filter while the visual theories concern themselves particularly with the need for schemata. Neither can be achieved without both analytic and syncretistic approaches because we cannot attend and perceive simultaneously giving equal weight to everything in our surroundings. Somehow a learning environment must be established which promotes and enables abstraction and the ability to select and develop concepts.

Just as we have schema for the artist and accumulated knowledge for the scientist so we need models of writing for English. It has been said many times that we learn to write through reading. Pupils ought to be placed in situations where they can draw on all sorts of schema using different types of symbol allowing interaction promoting variety and creativity. If we remember Bruner's stricture that it is the power of expectation rather than conceptual knowledge which shapes what we see both in art and life then we need to shake that expectation, to change it, to make both children and adults look anew.

To understand metaphor it is necessary to draw on our own schemata, experience and often cultural knowledge too. The ambiguity of metaphor means we have to 'read' it. Seeing, perceiving or 'reading' something takes place within a context. It is that context and 'cultural' mix which schools ought to be able to provide with the freedom to combine different subjects.

There is lots of evidence, Arnheim, Graham, Vygotsky, Lambert-Brittain, Freeman and Thomas & Silk to cite a few, suggesting that drawing and perception are an important part of children's thinking.[8] Part of the role for the image in thinking is expressed in Goodnow's "visible" thinking as it relates to cartoon drawings. Metaphor is much used in cartoon even if sometimes it is 'frozen' or clichéd. Designing cartoon narratives is a sure way to ensure that thrift, conservation, principles of organization and sequence, all of which are features of problem solving, are employed. Visible thinking is metacognitive when it is concerned with the task in this way and when it is part of the process of determining a different kind of syntax in order to clarify the 'message' or narrative.

The use of symbols encouraged the Junior pupils to respond with synecdochal figures, as with the images of babyhood in one and the hats

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[8] Arnheim (1969), Graham (1990), Vygotsky (1978) Lambert-Brittain (1979) Freeman (1990), Thomas & Silk (1990)

and broomsticks of many of the others. In many instances metacognitive powers are being invoked and because of the compression of information in the visual format the overview of narrative form is more easily obtained. Metathinking was also very much at work in the spontaneous oral editing of the tape of their writing which many of the primary children did.

In the Year Eight class some proved to be both able writers and effective cartoonists and several of the cartoons were developed in such a way that they could have been presented as a focus for techniques in writing. In *Bugsy goes to the Zoo* for example where the writing is shaped in the same way as the cartoons with frames and directional arrows.

When, in the second of these cartoons Bugsy returned as an established character, if there was any lack of clarity in the last frames it was not resolved until part two. The verbal indications were kept to a minimum because the author was growing in confidence. Thus, despite the fact that the next creation, Biggy was a somewhat paler Bugsy look-alike, visual symbolism was used to create an unambiguous part one cartoon. Part two commenced with a simple written explanation of the 'invisibility factor', just in case the reader had missed the point, followed by a written half created with a vividly visual and appealing quality. There was a simultaneous advance in the author's cartoon technique and a move into

an imaginative mode without any loss of the expected quality of written expression.

In the early stages of writing the cohesive devices used were fairly primitive and this pattern was replicated in the cartoon work. In order to have a continuous narrative the children resorted to verbal captions to create the links. In the Biggy cartoons though, a variety of symbols were introduced which offered prepositional equivalences, while in a later offering the written section used visual symbols as well as written ones to give cohesion to the story.

Although several of the pupils did make clear moves into their own visual grammar, still more filled their paper with visual metaphor. *Shopping for Jeans*[9] for example, is colourful in all respects. There was self-caricature as a small imp (perhaps not too far out); her sister was presented as somewhat obese and she created a mother with side boards and a spotty chin. Symbols expressed a falling in love with rainbow coloured jeans and also unmistakably revealed the pain of the price. The written section was again filled with 'pictures', with the detail suggesting that as well as having a vivid imagination, she might also have experienced something similar.

[9] Kate S.

As regards the analysis, the continuum established in Chapter Six, was developed as a fairly crude measure of evolution from written text to cartoon. It is relatively easy to assess the balance between written and illustrative content. What is harder is to determine the rate of interaction and the degree of difficulty that a particular balance represents. So many factors come into the equation and what proves difficult for one child and therefore represents a conceptual leap forward may be fairly easy for another, thus the categories remain fairly open. However as a rule of thumb the early stages, 1 and 2, offer possibilities of improvement in the surface features of the text; that is to say there is not at this level, sufficient illustrative material to give much of an overview. At stages 3 and 4 the development allows access to both surface features and a wider concept of narrative text (see p. 306 ff.). This is the most useful working area for a whole class since at this point the interaction levels are high and the children play with visual expression, starting to create narratives which use the strengths of both picture and word.

Some go further and think about ways of telling their stories more completely through images, only occasionally resorting to the use of words (usually only when an extremely difficult or abstract concept needs to be expressed). When pupils achieved the top two ratings there seemed, on the evidence accumulated in this study, to be less need to concentrate on problems from the basics of language and the visual material was capable of facilitating more advanced construction of narrative.

The emphasis here is on the class itself producing work which can be jointly discussed and then acted on. The children provide their own lesson materials which are fun to use and hopefully, equally amusing and interesting to make use of. Moreover the more able assist not only their own development but also that of others.

Even the very early stages of this work showed that there was considerable understanding of the ways in which visual symbols could function and there was undoubted tacit awareness of the interactive factor of which adverts make so much use.

As year eight pupils broadened the scope of their cartoon stories it became clear that not only did such methods offer an overview of narrative structure but also at times the possibility of examining how sentences are comprised, so that a number of children began to develop a syntax which combined visual and verbal forms. The section which follows deals with the simpler aspects of text which can be explained more easily using illustrative techniques.

2: The Surface Features of the Text

Amongst these are listed such matters as easily transferable descriptive or 'adjectival' items, the functioning of verbs, the placing of inverted commas, notions of tense and the paragraph.

It has long been recognised amongst English teachers that aspects of the mechanics of English - descriptive detail, the definition of speech, notions of tense, together with the concept of verbs of state and action - can all be reinforced by using cartoon drawings. Inverted commas is the prime example. Given a little forethought one can go further; pictorial narrative can be organised to show the function which paragraphs play in a story and of course the notion "light on the page" is a visual one too.

As a teaching tool, by the time the children had reached the stage where they either devised cartoon strip or heavily illustrated story, it was possible to use the cartoons to improve paragraphing, to examine pace and also encourage the transference of imagery. In addition the opening up of other communicative areas appeared to stimulate a wider and more varied use of source material. The overarching effect seemed to give the lie to the 'literal phase' or, perhaps it was just that these pupils were emerging from it rather sooner than might otherwise have been the case.

Having selected narrative as the vehicle which, because of its versatility, could link visual and verbal symbolism and through which to explore the way children might develop their thinking and writing skills, there is a need

to take the experiment started here much further. Each of the youngsters from the best to the weakest would have benefited from revisiting their cartoons and exploring in some cases, surface features and general cohesion and in other cases, the actual structure of the stories and, quite often, the approach taken to audience and narrative delivery.

The authors of Big Feet Pete's exploits explored visual design and also incorporated ideas (especially comic ones) which they would not otherwise have considered. On close analysis, as we have seen, the cartoon showed a wealth of detail relating to the characters, the setting and the action. It is worth remembering that the sequel written by one of the trio, despite many basic errors, was a definite advance on his previous efforts.

I had expected the humour to transfer from the cartoon to the writing. Interestingly there was significant evidence that with encouragement, the reverse was also seen. One or two of the older group of girls enjoyed writing about amusing situations but in the work of the Junior school children, two made reference to a joke in their writing and then actually told it in their cartoon.

School Performance, from the same group, was an early, part cartoon, part written, story[10] where the illustrations added significantly to the descriptive detail and where the writers were using both verbal and illustrative forms for drafting their tale. As the story stands both halves are indispensable to the whole meaning.

Work produced by the boys conformed to the stereotype and was slightly disappointing for that reason. They did not respond to the source material with anything like the enthusiasm of the girls although it had been chosen with the specific purpose of including them. They enjoyed borrowing models from computer graphics and comics, showing some skill in using and part-creating them but the narrative thrust was never as fully developed as in the girl's work. Perhaps, as was suggested, their selection of models proved less flexible, and perhaps being so much in the minority also influenced their showing. For all that their drafts presented a useful method for improving their written texts. This experiment firmly dispelled, in my mind at least, any doubt that lack of drawing talent need be a bar to the benefits of drafting with visual symbols. It is however essential to provide a teaching input to give access to differing modes of visual expression which do not demand a high level of draughtsmanship and which encourage patterning and organization of borrowed symbols.

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[10] Rupinder and Nuzhat - Marsh Mellow Country

Andrew C.[11] in the secondary class for example, needed time to examine what he had done and to be shown samples of others' work to extend his own thinking and writing. *Killer Ducks* was another piece of work which might have received similar attention. Andrew G.[12], in common with many of the boys, avoided any mention of genuine emotion or recording of experience close to self. It might have been possible at least to discuss the nature of his jokes and reality, even perhaps to have explored it through class discussion. His writing and cartoon work, like that of many of the boys, reflects the stereotypical male response. Despite the interesting detail there are strong echoes of the source material. He tends to make assertions not suggestions and he needs pushing towards more exploratory and reflective writing.[13]

Karen obviously enjoyed using a different medium. As the author of *Dressing Up* where complex sentence structure was already in evidence combined with a strong and mature sense of humour, a high standard might have been expected. Bugsy and Biggy show developmental features. The Baby Monster is heavily derivative but she was learning to use models as support and there are interesting details forcing Biggy into visibility. As regards surface features she managed, through the visual work,

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[11] Football

[12] Vanilla Ice Kid & Tommy Gun

[13] English in Education, Vol. 31, No. 3, 1997

to clarify her understanding of paragraphs while the punctuation of speech was also largely corrected in the later versions.

Peter L. in the misnamed *Snow* tried hard in the autobiographical section but he just was not as good as Kate. That said his cartoons were good enough to establish a useful point of reference to correct problems he had with surface features in his written work generally. I felt at this point how instructive it would have been to be able to return to the earlier group which attempted to create its own myths and to do so making much greater use of cartoon drawing in the early stages.

In the work of both boys and girls in the lower levels of achievement the concentration in narrative writing tended to be on the transmission of action and information about the action. Imagistic and affective approaches were more rarely considered or used. Pictures can help here. Examples of characters established through body position, dress, size or facial expression provide a model or base from which to extend the written passage.

To be effective, telling cartoon stories involves a great deal of abstraction and editing. Just how hard this proved is probably best underlined by reflecting on the difficulties experienced in the Rottweiller story, in *Heads Off,* and in *Vanilla Ice Kid.* None of these youngsters found the graphics too demanding but creating an unambiguous story line with a fully connected thread was not easy. That exercise in itself encourages more

flexible thinking and co-operative working so that, provided all the children participate, it is one way to encourage the exchange of ideas and proper shifts of focus.

Qualitative comparison, often closely linked with the affective, is also hard to achieve and even harder in pictorial mode. However examples of their cartoon stories could have been looked at critically in groups in order to raise consciousness of such issues here too.

The writer of *Spigle the Spider* however, found little difficulty in addressing the affective aspect. Spigle's own roller coaster of emotions in his trauma packed existence is there for all to see. There is constant threat of being crushed in one way or other. The 'menace' is omnipresent - literally and metaphorically (see frames 8 and 9). Apart from the dates to show the passage of time there are very few verbal captions, only the barest of essentials - nothing more is needed.

The author of *Magnet and the Iron Man* could write. When she turned to cartoon with *Abigale* there is some very impressive, deliberate draughtsmanship (it attained level 4) but there is only a little transference of imagery; the two halves are really quite separate. But then she created

Spigle. She and Karen[14] score highly in their moves into a visual syntax. To turn some of their cartoons into written narratives given the early drafts, would be an exciting challenge.

However there was one aspect to which the boys in the group especially responded with alacrity - the joke. In the otherwise uninspired *Snow*, a pun is offered which works a little like the Dallas 'chariot' mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. The logo supplies the secondary subject carrying all the associations we now have with the designer sports tags (here Adidas) and the harsh reality of a games lesson with an unsympathetic games teacher with whom Peter has 'Adinaff'!

3: Developing the Narrative Structure

At this point considerations of the wider picture, the syncretistic view of story shape and ways in which young writers can be encouraged to plan, are looked at in greater depth.

On reflection the effects of using drawing could be tapped into much more rapidly with the older pupils than with the Year Six. This might have been solely owing to their increased maturity but it might have been

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[14] Goldilocks, Bugsy and Biggy stories.

affected by the slightly different research agenda and the way in which the material was presented.

In the writing of the Primary class, more particularly in work like *Ghosts*, the *Quarter Backs*, in the *Marsh Mellows* and in *School Performance* there was a burgeoning use of pictorial and aural symbolism. The combination of written and illustrative tasks helped the children to develop the way they thought about what they were doing and they began slowly to move away from a mere written account of the plot. That they were concerned moreover with the whole narrative shape was probably of greater significance than the spatial and visual detail because it could be argued that the old creative writing techniques of the sixties succeeded in producing memorable and very 'visual' descriptions. This method however, encourages and facilitates an understanding of the whole narrative; it gives an overview of the task as well as improving the detail.

In a number of pieces the narrative thread is quite long and complex, as for example in *The Horrible Witch* and *School Performance*, or bustling with action and colour as in *Ghosts* and the *Quarter Backs* series, while in others the detail is lavish with a tactile quality (*About When I Eat the Pineapple*). The next stage would be to bring the various qualities together in each of their texts.

The response to the tasks was varied. Some were a lot less adventurous than others whose ghosts were taken straight from a computer screen (as the outline gives away), since at least one ghost tale is related without any words.

Some used more conventional images which were much more detailed and which, while not creating narrative, added significantly to the information in the verbal text. These youngsters would probably require quite a lot of help to take the next step from merely placing images on paper in a rather haphazard manner to putting them in a logical order for story telling.

The lack of follow up in many cases meant that areas of difficulty were left unresolved and wider issues relating to narrative form and shape remained untouched. The boys in the primary class, because of their reliance on the world of cartoon, video and computer games had, as we have seen, established a visual shorthand or series of schema to tell particular kinds of story. However to persuade them to explore the other types of narrative with which at this stage they were visibly interested, would have involved either spending more time on developing alternative and equally satisfying prefigured resources, or encouraging greater flexibility with what they had.

That said, there was a clear need to explore narrative structure more explicitly for the majority, since many plumped for 'the diary' owing to its simple organization and generally speaking there was little attempt to experiment with the chronological order. Although some pupils contributed only illustrated story, even this formula showed a very strong relationship between the writing and the drawing. Because additional information was offered in the illustrations the visual material was there as an integral part of the overall text.

After a brief discussion with the author of *Goldilocks* there seemed to be a growing audience awareness developing. The visual image is used to evoke an emotional response in the Bugsy cartoons, especially the last one. Though this has more than a touch of Hollywood schmaltz, the technique allows the handling of the imaginative side with greater effectiveness than might otherwise have been the case. Taking the time to discuss the story further in order to encourage a more overtly conscious awareness of this visual creation would, I suspect have been a fruitful enterprise.

Particularly when Donald Lee Fraser's Secret Diary appeared on the scene the extent to which irony, focalization and authorial viewpoint could be presented by such inexperienced writers was exciting, with its 'keyhole ellipsis' and a variety of metonymic symbols.

Exploring concepts here demands consideration of how far a young female writer has accurately allowed us to appreciate a small boy's viewpoint and how seriously should we take it? (In the earlier autobiographical sketch *Dressing Up* or in *Our New Roller Boots* for instance, the matters alluded to are only partly tongue-in-cheek.) The work also shows the influence of advertising slogans as metaphors. Humour often occurs as though it is seen as an essential, an integral component, of a cartoon.

The visual quality of this story allows an exploration of narrative techniques which would not otherwise be possible at this stage in children's development. Aspects of narrative voice would be more readily understood by much older students who have had experience and access to a wide range of reading material and can thus be encouraged to draw comparisons. This makes unfair demands on attention span for the very young, but Donald's actions and offered idiom would permit access to complex concepts without recourse to other written texts.

Notions of time and order can similarly be explored. "Text time... is a spatial not a temporal dimension." [15] There are ways of exploring visually the reflection of time difference. For example the past, that is memory, can be conjured through the 'thinks' bubble, and analepsis, Rimmon-Kenon tells

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[15] Rimmon-Kenan, S., Narrative Fiction, 42-45

us, occurs more frequently in our Western literary tradition than prolepsis. Now and again the children's work reflects this too.

Even duration can be considered through the number of frames, (text-time versus 'real' story-time) though care has to be exercised here because complex ideas can also take up larger numbers of explanatory frames - and this in turn may unwittingly affect narrative pace. Characterisation when expressed visually is somewhat restricted where it is dependent on physical features and such relations as are suggested by spatial contiguity. Donald, to take one example, is simply established as a small boy playing football with his dad. The picture gives us the spots and the gear, and facial expression helps set the mood. The writing, both within the frames and at the end, summarises quite neatly and also comments further on Donald's feelings. Generally where an idea has complexity, the pupils return to the written word to express it (see Donald's Wednesday scenario). This might all have been created through pictures but that proviso establishes the efficiency of written expression. Understanding the relation between the written word and the visual image and what each can do effectively is the key to making the interaction work.

The double bubble in *Eric-the-Half-a-Bee* was the writer's own invention to convey an analeptic reference. Given the time to explore these developments would have offered insight both to her and the rest of the group when they returned to their written stories. Meanwhile in respect of

the narrating or experiencing self, that is to say - who tells the story ?- several have already begun to vary their approach.

Conclusion

Looking back now on the empirical work as it progressed, the main difficulty was always the same, there was never enough time to cover all the work necessary. With the Primary school group I had only ever hoped to explore the way children used images when writing narratives. First though it was necessary to see what stage they were at and to work with them to raise the value they placed on illustration when they used it. The point at which we stopped was precisely the point at which it would have been interesting to see what happened when they began to draft with complete cartoons.

With the older, secondary group the lack of preparatory time for those who lacked either the confidence or the ability to produce cartoons proved a severe check to several in the selected group. Fortunately the others listened, borrowed where they could and, when they could not, devised the best caricatures they were able to draw.

If we look in detail at those selected seven, based on their written texts, Esther, Vicky and Karen were the first three, and in that selected order. Reservations about that have already been expressed but there is also the further factor raised by Dixon and Stratta to consider, namely that

Grandad was personal writing, as indeed was *Dressing Up*, but *The Further Adventures of the Iron Man* demanded the more difficult, imaginative approach. Esther, the author, may have struggled with the drawing but she used her overview of the task, continued in a humorous vein, and showed ways to link the verbal and visual aspects - ways which could have proved helpful in discussion even when not fully satisfactory from her story's perspective.

In Chapter Seven it was acknowledged that expressing verbal thought in images requires a firm grasp of what you are doing and demonstrates metacognitive awareness. That may be so but the important point is that the visual understanding will stay as a half grasped concept and will remain implicit, unless and until, what has been shown has been made explicit - either by talking through the visual expression with peers or teachers, or by turning the visual narrative into a written one, or both. A lot can be achieved even when the interaction is a very basic (a), that is to say the illustration is largely representational but as we approach (c), and a much greater level of interdependence between the verbal and illustrative factors, the potential for exploiting this kind of work as an exploratory and learning tool becomes exponentially greater. There is an overview, a metaphoric form of thinking which also takes place in order to produce narratives with an interaction level (c) but the 'seeing anew' ought to be in the creation of the enhanced written piece - the final draft.

Metaphoric thinking is not so much a level of thought but more a facilitator of conceptual growth and it is the way in which the tacit component through the visual aspect is tapped. Through it a number of these young cartoonists have shown, despite too little direct help or teaching, an ability to develop wider understandings of their own.

Finally then, though much is left undone and some aspects are inconclusive, there is, I am convinced, a case for pressing the advantages of cross-curricular work, which embraces a visual component, in all classrooms. There is, I believe sufficient evidence even in this small sample, to indicate that properly used drawings or cartoons can offer access to different ways of thinking and other approaches to problem solving.

Just as most definitions of metaphor fail to grasp its essence because they are wholly verbal, miss the visual element, and are therefore reductive, much of our effort to aid learning processes misses essentially memorable ideas and insightful offerings because we fail to grasp the importance of the primary sense, sight. That is surprising in a culture which has come to rely so heavily on visual media and which offers our children film, video and computer graphics as a quick and easy alternative to the printed page. It should not be like this; the visual aspect must be more carefully prepared.

From the very beginning the comic element was already strongly in evidence in the work of the Year Seven secondary class. It might therefore

be argued that if in the search to provide differing and more flexible ways of thinking, metaphor and joke (its close relative) are so important, as indeed I believe they are, then this group already had a head start.

In fact I believe it to be entirely possible that this might have been the case but without a much longer research phase and a control class which showed little sign of humorous touches in its early compositions, it is yet another thought reduced to the level of a hunch. Perhaps the cartoon development would have lesser part to play in any subsequent improvement in their writing. However the secondary group with which I began, the producers of *Six Feet Under* and *Stealing Oil,* because of its composition and previous track record might almost be said to offer such a control, as indeed might the Primary group. Moreover the factor however important and generally useful, is only one and it does not negate the technical improvements or the overview of narrative shape which cartooning permits.

Even at the level of this small scale research it is possible to see the openings for teaching both the basic skills of literacy and quite complex approaches to literature - basic concepts therefore *and* very advanced ones too. More importantly, I believe, once the process is accepted and understood by teachers, it is fun for the pupils and therefore memorable, and it is also a very much quicker way to learn. Its appeal cuts through resistance and psychological block for the struggling learner, while for the

more advanced youngsters, the brevity of the cartoon form allows rapid access to the shape of narrative and how it works.

This research deals only with developing narrative and writing skills. Other subjects too, both in Arts and Science could make better use of visual schema if the redrafting process were embraced with a more considered awareness of how the process of inter-symbolic coding and exchange can stimulate and aid learning.

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